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THE BEQUEST OF  
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A  
MEMORIAL  
OF THE  
Semi-Centennial Celebration  
OF THE  
FOUNDING OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
UTICA, N. Y.

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UTICA, N. Y.  
PUBLISHED BY ELLIS H. ROBERTS.  
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## SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

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It was determined about the 1st of September, 1866, by the First Presbyterian Church of Utica, to celebrate the FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY of its Sunday School with more than ordinary ceremony. For this purpose, a committee of arrangements was appointed, consisting of the following named persons: Mr. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman*; ERWIN A. HAMMOND, Mrs. MARY W. BUSSEY, HENRY H. HURD, and Mrs. GEORGE L. CURRAN, and on the 20th of September, the following Circular was issued:

UTICA, N. Y., 20th Sept., 1866.

The SUNDAY SCHOOL of the FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH is happy to record you among its former members, and begs your attendance on the celebration of its FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, on Saturday and Sunday, the 20th and 21st of October next.

The order of exercises is as follows:

*Saturday Evening, October 20.*—At the City Hall, TEA MEETING and interchange of Reminiscences—oral and written—Letters and Addresses.

*Sunday, October 21.*—10½ A. M.—Sermon by Rev. P. H. FOWLER, D. D., present pastor of the church. 3 P. M.—Children's Meeting. 7 P. M.—Semi-Centennial Report of the School, and Addresses.

Please reply to this invitation; and whether you accept or decline it, will you favor us with your reminiscences of the school, its officers and teachers; they will be of value in the preparation of the Semi-Centennial Report, or of interest as read at the meetings. Awaiting your early reply,

Respectfully yours,

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Ch'n Com.*

The invitation thus given to the old teachers and members of the school, was handsomely responded to, either in person or by letter. A large representation appeared at the Jubilee, many persons coming hundreds of miles on purpose to enjoy its festivities. The veterans of the school, who resided in the city and its immediate vicinity, were present in very respectable force. Although many of them had belonged, for years, to other communions, they seemed now to forget the fact. They renewed their youth amid the inspiring scenes in which they necessarily played no inconspicuous part, and perhaps breathed more than one sigh for the good old days of that Christian unity which gave to their beloved school the name of "the Union Sabbath School." Too much praise cannot be awarded to those who had immediate charge of, and to those who contributed to the festive arrangements for Saturday night, and the religious ceremonies on Sunday. Every thing was planned and conducted on a scale of liberality befitting the dignity of the occasion; and the gratitude so justly due, was warmly expressed by all who were privileged to enjoy the fruits of so much thoughtful preparation.

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EXERCISES AT THE CITY HALL ON SATURDAY EVENING,  
OCTOBER 20, 1866.

The hour appointed for the opening of the meeting at the City Hall was seven o'clock, P. M. No sooner were the doors opened, than the crowd of guests began to fill the Hall, and although nearly all had arrived before half past seven, it was found impossible to call the meeting to order before eight o'clock, so many were the greetings to be exchanged between long separated friends, and so many the introductions to be made between members of the same

school at widely different epochs. The hour thus passed was most exhilarating, and made a happy prelude to the more formal exercises which followed. The Hall had been admirably arranged for the Festival. Ample space was provided in the middle of the large area for the throng of promenaders, while the seats which skirted the walls, and filled the ascending platform at the south end, afforded ample accommodation to those who were disposed to quiet. The decorations were characteristic. Over the door of entrance was this inscription:

1866.

#### THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

On the south wall, and opposite the entrance door, were three large tablets. The first, beginning at the left hand, was inscribed with the names of

#### *Our Ministers.*

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| EZEKIEL WILLIAMS, | SAMUEL L. MERRELL, |
| GEORGE S. WILSON, | EDWARD D. MORRIS,  |
| CHARLES STUART,   | WILLIAM HOUSE,     |
| EDWARD BRIGHT,    | ANSON J. UPSON,    |
| JOHN MORGAN,      | CHARLES DUNNING,   |
| OLIVER BRONSON,   | JOHN R. LEWIS,     |
| H. STEELE CLARK,  | ADAM MARTIN,       |
| JAMES H. DWIGHT,  | THEODORE POND,     |
| JAMES M. CRAIG.   |                    |

The middle tablet had the honored names of the five young ladies who founded the school in

1816.

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| ALIDA VAN RENSSELAER, | ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD, |
| CATHARINE W. BREESE,  | SARAH MALCOLM,       |
| MARY E. WALKER.       |                      |

*Our Honored Dead.*

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| MARY E. OSTROM,   | TRUMAN PARMELE,        |
| SARAH K. CLARKE,  | SUSAN BAGG,            |
| EUNICE CAMP,      | THERON T. POND,        |
| WILLIAM WILLIAMS, | MAHLON M. ELLIS,       |
| WALTER KING,      | EDWARD VERNON,         |
| ANDREW MERRELL,   | CHARLES BARTLETT,      |
| IRA MERRELL,      | AMANDA WINSTON,        |
| LEWIS MERRELL,    | THOMAS E. CLARK,       |
| CHARLES CAMP,     | SOPHIA WILLIAMS,       |
| JOHN BRADISH,     | ELIZABETH HOYT,        |
| ABIGAIL HANDY,    | EUROTAS P. HASTINGS,   |
| ROSWELL KEEELER,  | LEWIS BAILEY,          |
| RICHARD H. WELLS, | JAMES NICHOLS,         |
| THOMAS MAYNARD,   | STEPHEN MATHER,        |
| RACHAEL KELLOGG,  | MARY A. BRADISH,       |
| CORNELIA THOMAS,  | JOSEPH COLWELL,        |
| JOHN COLWELL,     | CATHARINE H. WILLIAMS. |

The right hand tablet was filled with the names of

*Our Missionaries.*

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| MARIA SARTWELL LOOMIS, | Sandwich Islands. |
| JAMES GARRETT,         | India.            |
| MARY BARKER SAMPSON,   | India.            |
| HARRISON G. O. DWIGHT, | Turkey.           |
| ASAHEL GRANT,          | Persia.           |
| S. WELLS WILLIAMS,     | China.            |
| W. FREDERIC WILLIAMS,  | Assyria.          |
| SARAH POND WILLIAMS,   | Assyria.          |
| MARY J. CARROLL,       | Indians.          |
| ALFRED NORTH,          | N. A. Indians.    |
| HARRIET A. SHELDON,    | Cherokee Indians. |
| SARAH DEAN,            | Cherokee Indians. |

A spacious platform had been erected on the east side of the Hall for the accommodation of the Presiding officer and Chaplain of the meeting, the clergy of the city, the

Superintendent of the school, the speakers of the evening, and a few of the teachers and members of the school in its earliest days. A conspicuous object on one end of the platform was a stand loaded with a huge anniversary cake, a sort of golden wedding cake; and this was balanced on the opposite side by a pyramid of clustering grapes, the appropriate and welcome gift of Mr. TRUMAN P. HANDY, of Cleveland. The gentlemen who occupied the platform were Judge WILLIAM J. BACON, of the Supreme Court, President; the Rev. SAMUEL L. MERRELL, of Theresa, N. Y., Chaplain; Mr. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, Superintendent; the Rev. Doctors EDWARD BRIGHT, Editor of *The Christian Examiner*, New York; PHILEMON H. FOWLER of the First Presbyterian Church, SAMUEL W. FISHER of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, ASHBEL G. VERMILYE of the Reformed Dutch Church, DANIEL G. COREY of the Bleecker St. Baptist Church, ALFRED S. PATTON of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, Rev. JOHN LYLE, City Missionary; Professor ANSON J. UPSON, of Hamilton College; Messieurs WILLIAM TRACY and GURDON BURCHARD, of New York; MILTON BRAYTON, of Western; HOVEY K. CLARKE, of Detroit; ROBERT B. SHEPARD, of Hudson; JOHN H. EDMONDS, JOHN F. SEYMOUR, and THOMAS W. SEWARD, of Utica.

At eight o'clock, Judge BACON called the meeting to order, and directed the exercises to be opened by singing the following hymn to the Tune of "Auld Lang Syne."

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind;  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And songs of auld lang syne.  
For auld lang syne we meet to night,  
For auld lang syne;  
To sing the song our fathers sang  
In days of auld lang syne.



We've passed through many varied scenes,  
 Since youth's unclouded day;  
 And friends, and hopes, and happy dreams,  
 Time's hand hath swept away.  
 And voices that once joined with ours,  
 In days of auld lang syne,  
 Are silent now, and blend no more  
 In songs of auld lang syne.

Yet ever has the light of song  
 Illumed our darkest hours;  
 And cheered us on life's toilsome way,  
 And gemmed our path with flowers;  
 The sacred songs our fathers sang,  
 Dear songs of auld lang syne;  
 The hallowed songs our fathers sang  
 In days of auld lang syne.

But when we've crossed the sea of life,  
 And reached the heav'nly shore,  
 We'll sing the songs our fathers sing,  
 Transcending those of yore;  
 We'll meet to sing diviner strains  
 Than those of auld lang syne;  
 Immortal songs of praise unknown  
 In days of auld lang syne.

The Rev. Mr. MERRELL then read the 145th Psalm of David, and offered prayer; after which the Hymn "Shall we gather at the River," was sung.

Shall we gather at the river  
 Where bright angel feet have trod;  
 With its crystal tide forever  
 Flowing by the throne of God?

CHO.—Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
 The beautiful, the beautiful river—  
 Gather with the saints at the river,  
 That flows by the throne of God.

On the margin of the river,  
 Washing up its silver spray,  
 We will walk and worship ever,  
 All the happy, golden day.

CHO.

Ere we reach the shining river,  
 Lay we every burden down;  
 Grace our spirits will deliver,  
 And provide a robe and crown.

CHO.

Soon we'll reach the silver river,  
Soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
Soon our happy hearts will quiver  
With the melody of peace.

СНО.

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Judge BACON now arose and delivered the following

## ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

Cotemporaries of my early days, companions of my riper age, children of my advancing years, a happy greeting to you all. In the name of the hospitable hosts by whose kind invitation I occupy the head of this table, I bid you a hearty welcome. This is to be a night of retrospection and of reminiscence. We are to look back on fifty years of vanished time. It is not a long period in the world's history, and yet how crowded has this half century been in the great epochs and startling events. Within that period, many around us have witnessed the culminating power, the decadence and the final fall and utter overthrow of the first and great Napoleon. Kingdoms and dynasties have been rent asunder or passed away, war and revolution have followed each other in quick succession—the triumphs of the wicked and the base, for a season, have been disastrous and discouraging, the achievements of the good and true-hearted, auspicious and benign, and in our day the long series of great events has just closed with the crushing out of that terrible rebellion, which, while it has covered the land with glory, has filled it with graves, and steeped it in tears. Its sullen waves still beat upon the shore, soon, however, to be hushed to a willing repose, or compelled to quiescence by the great, sound loyal heart of the American people.

But at present we are not concerned with the history of the world, of empires or of states; we proclaim a truce to discussions political and polemical. We are looking back fifty years, to the feeble beginnings of an institution whose jubilee we are now celebrating. At that period, Utica was a small but thriving village, containing a population of

about 2,800 souls, all told. It had its houses of entertainment, its marts for business, its haunts of vice. It had also its churches, of comparatively feeble growth; its public and private schools, such as they were, but it had no Sabbath Schools. This want was then to be supplied, and the First Presbyterian Society of Utica, has the high honor of being the pioneer institution which led on the march of Christian effort here for the benefit of children. I know not in whose brain the project had its birth, but its practical development, in an established and permanent Sabbath School, is due to the zeal and enterprise of five young ladies of that Society. Their names have become familiar; but they will bear repetition. They were MARY E. WALKER, SARAH MALCOLM, ALIDA VAN RENSSELAER, CATHERINE BREESE and ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD. Of the survivors of these, the second one I have named, now Mrs. SARAH M. BALL, of Brooklyn, we have the singular good fortune, to-night, to number as one of our most honored guests. She comes at the end of fifty years to recall the scenes and look upon some of the faces familiar to her youth. She will find many vacant places, and in view of the bereavements, we have all experienced, be led with many of us to exclaim

"Oh! for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still."

In common with her associates she began a work small and feeble enough at first, but developing steadily and surely into the great institution, some of the results of which we are this night to commemorate. It attracted no public observation, it was ushered in by no imposing ceremonies; but it was a work on which the angels might look approvingly, a work

"Not scorned in heaven, tho' little noticed here."

From that little germ what far reaching influences, what beneficent results have flowed; influences and results, too, that will continue to flow on in a never ceasing tide, till

they break upon the shores of eternity, and become coeval with the untold years of God.

This evening, as I have intimated, is to be mainly devoted to reminiscences of the past, the recollections of the men, the women, the incidents of this Sabbath School, whose semi-centennial we now celebrate. The materials are ample, the subjects are fertile of illustration. At a later period in these exercises, I may perhaps avail myself of the privilege of recalling some matters within my personal recollection. They will be comparatively of small amount and of meager interest, but may add perhaps a trifling contribution to the general fund. At present I give place to others, furnished with better and perhaps longer memories than mine, and more ample materials, the contributions of others from abroad. The names of many of those now departed, who were once connected with this school as pupils, teachers or superintendents, are well worthy of commemoration. Among these we most readily recall the names of PARMELE, of WILSON, of NOYES, of MAYNARD, of Mrs. OSTROM, Mrs. CARROLL, Mrs. WILLIAMS and Mrs. CLARKE, honored names all, whose record is with us, and whose memorial is on high. Let us give due honor to the living who have labored faithfully and successfully in this harvest field, but let us especially tread lightly and reverently on the ashes, and linger lovingly amid the tombstones of those who have gone to meet the Master's plaudits, and whose memory, like flowers of perennial blossoming, will exhale sweet odors through coming generations.

In concluding his address, the Judge gave full permission to the speakers who were to follow him to be as personal and egotistical as they pleased. They were only not to be tedious. How far this permission was made available, and this injunction obeyed, the succeeding pages will amply show.

The first speaker called upon was Mr. ROBERT B. SHEPARD, of Hudson.

## ADDRESS OF ROBERT B. SHEPARD.

While attending the Sunday School Convention of teachers recently held in this city, I received an invitation from both your Pastor and Superintendent, to be present on this fiftieth anniversary of your Sunday School; and, until a more formal invitation was extended me by the Committee of Arrangements, I was anticipating only unalloyed pleasure in its acceptance. I confess my ardor was not a little cooled on receipt of the latter invitation, to find another coupled with it, namely, to make a speech. As this is a luxury in which I seldom indulge, and then only before small and familiar audiences, to undertake it before one so large and discriminating as I knew this would be, was utterly confounding, and I was on the point of declining the proffered honor, when a happy thought suggested itself, namely, to follow the example of some members of Congress,—write out a speech, and, if doomed to read it to listless ears, or empty benches, by way of retaliation, publish it in the next day's "*Morning Herald*," having no constituency to dazzle with its stupidity. This, too, would insure condensation, an important item in the recitation of facts. Thus relieved, in part, of my difficulty, the invitation was accepted, and through a kind Providence, I am with you to unite in reviewing the memories of the past, and calling to mind the virtues, the faith and successes of those who have labored in this Sunday School, and have either entered upon the rewards of those labors, or are waiting patiently, yet hopefully, for the bidding of the Master, to "go up higher."

Fifty years in the world's history, is fraught with momentous consequences to peoples and nations; fifty years in the history of an individual is often filled with striking and noteworthy events. In our own country, rushing as we do from one standpoint to another with almost lightning rapidity, overturning, as in a moment, the opinions and institutions of ages, there are few monuments of man's rearing which survive the changes of half a century. A simple, unpretending organization like a Sunday School,

which has outlived such a period of time, may not only be deemed venerable, but very properly demand a suitable recognition of our respect. It is therefore well that you have determined, by this Jubilee gathering, and these appropriate solemnities, to celebrate the fiftieth Anniversary of your Sunday School.

In adding my mite to the general contribution of reminiscences to be gathered up from the past history of this school, I propose to occupy your attention for a short time in reciting such incidents as made an impression upon my own mind during the period of my connection with it. This commenced in the year 1828, and closed in the early part of 1835.

Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE was Superintendent when I first entered the school. He was succeeded by Mr. BRIGGS W. THOMAS, and he by the speaker. Although foreign to the history of the school, it is a coincidence perhaps worth noticing, that Mr. PARMELE afterwards became Superintendent of the Lafayette Square Presbyterian Church Sunday School, of New Orleans, and that the speaker, with a similar intervention, succeeded him there in the same office. During most of the time, if not all, Mrs. OSTROM, whose memory is cherished in the heart of every teacher and scholar, was Superintendent, and Miss SUSAN BURCHARD, (now Mrs. TAINTOR,) Assistant Superintendent of the Female Department. The latter person is present on this occasion, and I have had the pleasure of taking her by the hand for the first time in thirty years. I cannot refrain expressing the thought which presses itself upon my mind, how delightful it will be, in heaven at last, to greet those sainted ones who were once our fellow-workers on earth, but who have already ceased from their labors and entered upon the joys of the better world.

Among the teachers of that day were many whose names I should delight to recall, but time does not permit. SAMUEL WELLS WILLIAMS, who has since distinguished himself by his missionary and literary labors in China, was for some time before his departure for that field of usefulness,

the life of the teachers' meeting. His injunction as we bade him good bye, on the packet boat, (the aristocratic mode of conveyance in those days,) was, "Don't give up the teachers' meeting," and it was obeyed. I have never found more intelligent, better instructed, or more pious teachers than those who occupied that responsible position in this school at the time under consideration. While but few comparatively attended the weekly teachers' meeting, most of the younger portion belonged to the Bible class, which, after all, was the great school of the church, and in which they were qualified for the responsible duties of teachers.

Shortly after coming to this city, I became an inmate of the family of the late WILLIAM WILLIAMS, father of your present superintendent, no doubt remembered by some who hear me, as an enlightened and patriotic citizen, an enterprising merchant, a true friend, and an honored officer in the church. His mind, during the last years of his life, was under a cloud, but my recollections of him are connected with his palmy days, and are of the most grateful character. But it is to MRS. WILLIAMS, the mother, a woman of rare intellectual qualities and Christian virtues, a devoted teacher and unwavering friend of the Sunday School, to whom I wish to direct attention. Through her influence I was induced to become a teacher, at the early age of eighteen, while still unconverted. There were several young men in the school who occupied a similar position to myself. It was under a faithful appeal to this class of persons by Mr. PARMELE, I received my first serious impressions. While examining the scholars at one of the afternoon sessions, he had occasion to comment upon the interrogatory of the Apostle in the 10th chapter of Romans, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" Interpreting the words *preach* as teaching, and *sent* as called or instructed of God, he very naturally showed how necessary it was to be taught of the Holy Spirit,—to have an experimental knowledge of the truths of the gospel,—in order rightly to teach others. I felt the force of the argument, and the incongruity of my position; it was that of the

"blind leading the blind," and there was danger of both falling into the ditch. I communicated my feelings to Mrs. WILLIAMS, as totally unfit to be a teacher, and my determination to relinquish my class. Most earnestly did she entreat me to change my resolution, as it could be no other than a fearful step from God; and urging me to obtain at once that fitness which was so needful.

I allude to this incident in my own history, as an illustration of the fidelity of this true disciple, and as an argument in favor of employing unconverted persons, of good moral character and other necessary qualifications, where better ones cannot be obtained. I do it also to encourage those who may be similarly situated, to persevere, as a step in the path of duty which may lead to the most desirable results. Every one of those young men to whom I have alluded, as well as myself, became professors of religion while teachers in this Sunday School. On my knees, by the side of this godly woman, agonizing in prayer for my spiritual deliverance, I gave my heart to God, and found peace.

The converts of those days were not suffered to be idlers. They were immediately set at work, for there is work to do in every church,—work in the prayer meeting, work in distributing tracts, work in the Sunday School, work to "gather the children in," work in watching with the sick and dying, aye, and work to "cover up the dead." Those who remember the plague of 1832, and were among the fifty young men who gave their services to the Board of Health as watchers, &c., know to what I allude. My first experience as a watcher on that memorable occasion, was with the gentleman, (Mr. LAWSON,) who succeeded me in the superintendency, when himself and three other members of his family lay stricken down with that fearful malady, the cholera. Wonderful to relate, they all recovered, and he, especially, was preserved to be afterwards, and for a long period, Superintendent of the school. The recollection of that night can never be effaced from my memory.

I will relate a single anecdote connected with this sad



visitation, characteristic of one of our most faithful teachers, Mr. C. Within two or three days after the breaking out of the epidemic, a large number of the citizens had fled to the surrounding country, and in so doing had monopolized nearly every vehicle which was to be had for love or money. Mr. C. was a bachelor, and boarded with a widow lady. She had two daughters, from 10 to 14 years of age. The female part of the family became much alarmed, and it was determined to leave the city. The only conveyance which could be obtained, was a one horse wagon, much in the condition of the deacon's chaise, as it neared its final catastrophe. On this were piled trunks and many other articles necessary to the contemplated sojourn in the country. Just as the outskirts of the city were reached, the wagon gave out, and Mr. C. came to the instant conclusion it was a Divine interposition which forbade their further flight. Despite all entreaties, he positively refused to make any attempt to procure another conveyance, or take another step in the prohibited direction; the party therefore returned to their deserted dwelling. Some of them soon after sickened, and narrowly escaped death, Mr. C. nursing them with all the tenderness of a woman; and they in turn, nursing him, when he was finally taken sick, and lay at death's door. They saved each other's lives, and Mr. C. firmly held that the breaking down of the wagon was a premonition of God's decision in the matter.

When a younger brother of your present Superintendent was an infant, he was placed with a nurse, residing some three and a half miles below the city, on the north bank of the river. Occasionally the mother spent a few days with her child. While on one of these visits she became deeply interested in the moral condition of the inhabitants of that hitherto neglected neighborhood. They were destitute of sanctuary and Sunday School privileges, spending the Sabbath in roaming over the fields, or lounging about the tavern. Her heart was affected by what she saw, and she resolved to do something for their spiritual welfare. Her first effort was to enlist the co-operation of the district

school teacher, and three or four young ladies, only one of whom was a professor of religion. With these persons, and three young men connected with this school, as teachers, a Sunday School was organized in the district school house. Well do I remember the cold winter day, when, in an open sleigh, Mrs. WILLIAMS, accompanied by three young men, rode to the appointed place. The children were there, for she had visited the farm houses, and invited them to attend. Things looked forbidding and cheerless in contrast with our own pleasant school at home. But there was no such word as *fail* in the vocabulary of this Christian woman, when God's glory, and the good of souls was at stake. Her faith in Him she served, upheld her amidst all discouragements. The school became a success, and was soon sustained without foreign aid. Our good pastor, Mr. AIKEN, became interested in the work, and occasionally preached at the school house. But the work did not fail to meet with opposition. It is recorded in the Book of Job, that "when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord, . . . Satan came among them." One came and preached another gospel in the school house. I am not sure his text was the one recorded in the 3d chapter of Genesis, "Ye shall NOT surely, die," but the doctrine preached was founded on that lie of the old serpent. It failed, however, to gain the hearts of the people, for the seeds of truth had already been sown in them, and was germinating, watered by prayer, and warmed by genial works of Christian love. During a revival of religion which took place in this city a year or two afterwards, quite a number of persons residing in the vicinity of the school, became subjects of renewing grace. A few years later, when passing through on the cars, I fell in company with a gentleman once an inmate of the WILLIAMS family, and as we neared the site of the old school house, he pointed me to a small church edifice standing near by, remarking that it was one of the results of this humble, unpretending Sunday School effort. In narrating these facts, it is possible I may have fallen into some slight errors, but I think my statements are in the main correct, and

worthy of a place among the reminiscences of this school. As a fitting interlude to these narratives, I may be permitted to introduce a minor strain, welling up from one of the most sacred memories of the past.

It was late in the fall, the snows of winter already beginning to whiten the ground. Death had entered our household circle, and she, so good, so kind, so gentle, so loving, and so loved, was laid low by his ruthless hand. We had gathered to take a last look of all that was mortal of Mrs. WILLIAMS, and bear it to its resting place. Among the stricken mourners were the members of her Sunday School class, sorrowing most of all that they should see her face no more; but there was a more lowly if not sadder band, standing aloof, and yet, as if by stealth, drawing near, to show their respect for one who had been to them a Dorcas while living. They were God's poor, whom she had clothed and fed and visited in their sickness and sorrows. I said to myself, as I saw their respectful yet sorrowing faces, "When I die, let the blessing of the poor and him that is ready to perish follow me, for that is sincere; and the great Master will add, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me.'"

At a somewhat later period, another Sunday School enterprise was commenced at a school house a short distance below the Starch Factory, on the road leading east from the city. Three or four young men every Sunday afternoon, left the church immediately after sermon, taking the towing path at a "double quick" as far as the bridge across the canal, near the factory, then the main road, and gathering up the children as they passed from house to house, the little ones, taking each other and their teachers by the hand, until the line would stretch across the entire road as it neared the school house. It was a pleasant sight. Happy children, happy teachers! How blessed to receive, and yet more to give, the meat that perisheth not to the lambs of the flock. This school was continued two summers; I cannot say how much longer. It would be strange if some of the seed then sown has not sprung up, and

produced trees of righteousness in the garden of the Lord. At a date still earlier than either of those to which I have referred, a Sunday School was organized by two young ladies, Misses MERRELL, teachers connected with this school, in the village of Frankfort, which was highly successful, and, if I am not mistaken, was the nucleus around which the first Presbyterian church in that village was gathered. These young ladies were among the most devoted members of the church, and earnest workers in the Sunday School. I remember when we carried one of them to her resting place in the old burying ground, and as the earth fell upon her coffin, we sung the words,

“My flesh shall slumber in the ground,  
Till the last trumpet’s joyful sound;  
Then burst the chains with glad surprise,  
And in my Saviour’s image rise.”

A gentle breeze fanned the atmosphere; the choral strains of Old Hundred, from subdued and trembling voices, floated in weary cadences of angelic harmony, and we could almost realize that that grave was the opening gate of paradise to the redeemed spirit.

I will relate an incident which at first may seem somewhat remarkable, and one which I never knew to occur in any other school with which I have been connected. On a perfectly cloudless morning, one of the most brilliant of the season, with no storm of wind or rain, or snow, with no unusual sickness among the children, or remarkable occurrence in the community, to cause such an event, we had one of the smallest attendances on record. Of girls there was scarcely any present, and of boys but few. Of teachers there was nearly the usual number in the male department, but teaching was not thought of. *J. Frost, Esquire*, noted for a very queer way of showing his fondness for children, was known to be in town that morning, and scarcely a girl or boy dared to venture out, fearing to encounter his too affectionate embrace;—few of those who did, failing to receive the tokens of his regard upon their cheeks, and thinking themselves fortunate to escape his grasp without a

bitten ear or finger. This was in the year 1834-5. The thermometer stood at 34° below zero.

I have alluded to "gathering the children in." The city was districted among the schools of various denominations, and then subdivided among the teachers of each school. One of our youngest teachers was assigned a district composed mostly of Irish families; one house in particular being filled from basement to attic with families of this class. To one only twenty years of age, it promised an exploration by no means agreeable. Having taken an observation of the premises, his heart failed him, and he delayed the proposed descent on this citadel of filth and wretchedness, until delay could be indulged in no longer. Retiring to an unfrequented garret, a strange place, some would think to obtain armor for such a conflict, he at length came forth well panoplied, and as valiant as David when he went out to meet Goliath. How wonderfully God furnishes his champions with weapons of holy warfare, when "sought to" therefor. The citadel was taken, every family was visited, and the young warrior returned from the battle field, experiencing not only the satisfaction arising from the performance of duty, but at having conquered himself; and with such a sense of God's gracious assistance as gave him courage for many another spiritual encounter.

During the period to which I have alluded, the external condition of the school was generally prosperous. I may be expected to say something of its spiritual condition. I have already referred to a religious interest among a certain portion of the teachers. Of individual cases among the scholars I have no definite recollection. There was generally more or less tender interest among them on the all-important subject. But the Sunday School was the seed time of spiritual things to the church, and the Bible class the harvest field. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, the scholars were usually transferred to the latter, in which were frequent manifestations of the Divine presence. Out of one hundred and fifty persons in that department during a single year, seventy united with the church, probably leav-

ing but few that were unconverted in the class. At the time I left the class and city, it was said that not one who had ever been a member, was known to have died unrepentant.

It is now more than thirty years since my connection with the school ceased; twenty of which have been spent in the metropolis of the south, and the remainder in a distant part of this State; but whether living under the skies of that sunny clime, or on the banks of the Hudson, I have never forgotten to prize the privileges and associations of those early days. Their memories are as fresh and green as if of yesterday; and often do my thoughts wander back to the grand old church, and the dear Sunday School rooms, long since laid in ashes.

My first recollections are associated with a Sunday School in my own mothers' house, contemporary with the organization of this school; so that I may say, I was born, and brought up, and have ever lived in the Sunday School; and there I hope to die. If it be God's will, let me die on the battle field, with my harness on; and may the children cover me with the flag of the school.

While attending the Convention to which I have heretofore alluded, solitary and alone, I took occasion to walk some of these once familiar streets. I read the names on the door-plates; they were not the names of former years. I gazed upon the windows behind whose panes familiar faces used to greet me. Those faces were gone, and I *felt* they were gone forever. But I learned a lesson,—“As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more forever.” I learned another lesson,—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.” I hope these impressions will be deepened by these Jubilee solemnities. And if we, my fellow laborers in the cause of the Saviour, are faithful in this blessed work, the day is not far distant, when we, with those who shall be given us as a

reward for our toil, shall all be welcomed to the great Sunday School Jubilee of the skies.

At the close of Mr. SHEPARD's Address, the Hymn "Who are these in Bright array," was sung :

Who are these in bright array,  
This exulting, happy throng,  
Round the altar night and day,  
Singing one triumphant song?

CHO.—They have clean robes, white robes,  
White robes are waiting for me!  
Yes, clean robes, white robes,  
Wash'd in the blood of the Lamb.

These through fiery trials trod,  
These from great afflictions came;  
Now before the throne of God,  
Sealed with his Almighty name. CHO.

Clad in raiment pure and white,  
Victor palms in every hand,  
Through the great Redeemer's might,  
More than conquerors they stand. CHO.

Joy and gladness banish sighs;  
Perfect love dispels all fears;  
And forever from their eyes  
God shall wipe away all tears. CHO.

Judge BACON here announced that the reading of the letters from old members and friends of the School was next in order, and assigned, first, Mr. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, and second, Mr. JOHN F. SEYMOUR to this duty. Only a part of these letters were read at this time. Many of them were read at the exercises in church the next afternoon; but they are all inserted in this place as properly constituting a most important part of Saturday evening's proceedings.

# LETTERS.

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*From Rev. Samuel C. Aiken, D. D.*

CLEVELAND, October 1, 1866.

REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D. :

MY DEAR SIR,—

It would give me great pleasure to be present on that interesting occasion, and to revive the memory of old scenes; but the state of my health will not allow me the pleasure. For several weeks I have been more unwell than usual, and find it necessary to avoid fatigue and excitement.

As to "reminiscences" of which you speak, I know not as I have any in addition to what was published in a circular a year or two ago, which you, or some other friend was kind enough to send me.

On the 3d of February, 1818, I was ordained and installed Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church and Society in Utica. So far as I recollect, the Sunday School had then been in existence about a year. At the head of it, and chief movers in the enterprise, were three young ladies—Miss MARY E. WALKER, subsequently the wife of JOHN H. OSTROM, Miss ALIDA VAN RENSSELAER, subsequently the wife of Judge CHARLES H. CARROLL, of Livingston county, and Miss SARAH MALCOLM, now Mrs. SARAH A. BALL. They were choice spirits, and well calculated to carry out what they had undertaken. Being young and inexperienced myself, I remember my first interview with them, and the kind of despondency I felt on learning the work they very modestly, yet earnestly assigned to me as their co-laborer. There were other ladies and gentlemen very soon enlisted, and who, for many years, did good service. The Sunday School of the First Church, amidst



all the troubles and revolutions through which the Society has passed, has always been a living, prosperous and useful institution. Connected with it was the Bible Class, large and flourishing under the superintendence of WALTER KING, Esq.,—a Christian teacher of rare gifts, and eminently successful. In these two institutions, many dear children and youth have been trained for usefulness and heaven. Not a few have lived and died as Foreign Missionaries.

That the rich blessings of heaven for generations yet to come, may rest upon the Sabbath School of the First Church in Utica, is the prayer of its old Pastor, and your brother in the ministry.

S. C. AIKEN.

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*From Elizabeth Bloodgood.*

ITHACA, September 18, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:

I find I have little to say, perhaps nothing of which you are not already cognizant. What good may have been done, belongs to others more than myself. In that little band, I remember with much affection those with whom I was so pleasantly associated, dear names, sweet memories, long since passed away, precious to us all. I think that the school was a strictly union school at its first commencement, but as the churches and place increased, each church and communion formed their separate schools, and I with my little class went as a teacher to Trinity Church, of which my family were members. I have nothing to add to what is already known to you, the discouragement of the first struggles, the ultimate success that crowned the small beginning. I would gladly avail myself of the invitation were it possible. Think of me at the throne of grace, and may God bless and prosper you in all good, is the prayer of yours very sincerely and truly.

ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD.

*From Helen L. Bell.*

CLIFTON, STATEN ISLAND, *October 10, 1866.*

MY DEAR SIR :

Your letter has recalled many fond memories connected with my early home, and the Sabbath School, so dear to my late husband, and in which he delighted to take part. My recollections of dates is not clear enough for me to state as fully as I could wish, such facts as in reply to your request I should desire.

My husband, the late TRUMAN PARMELE, (of whom you so tenderly speak,) almost grew up in that Sunday School at Utica. He was a veteran in the service long before I was acquainted with him. He was superintendent at the age of seventeen, continuing as such for several—say (ten or twelve) years, when a change of residence from Utica to New York dissolved the connection with that school, only, however, to form other relations in the same noble cause. While at Utica he prepared and caused to be published a question book, the first used in schools in this country. After a short stay in New York, he went to New Orleans, in 1831, where an inviting field awaited all earnest Christians. Of his labors in that city, I send a sketch contained in an obituary published in *that* city. From New Orleans he returned to New York, in 1836, where he remained until his death in 1845. Here he founded a flourishing Mission School, in which he continued until his death. Mr. PARMELE often reverted to the school in Utica, and to his associations there, with peculiar fondness; in all these privileges he took delight, and esteemed it no burden.

And now, sir, please accept my cordial sympathy with you and all associated with you on this occasion. As a native of Oneida, I am proud of her having been a pioneer in the Sunday School cause.

I remain, yours very truly,

HELEN L. BELL

*From William Walker, Esq.*

NEW YORK, *October 15, 1866.*

MY DEAR SIR :

I have distinct recollections of the first introduction of Sabbath Schools in Utica. A lady, the daughter of a clergyman in Troy, on a visit to her friends in Utica, proposed the establishment of a Sabbath School. This lady is still living as the wife of Mr. JAMES BROWN, of this city, who is the senior member of the well known banking house of BROWN Brothers & Co. Miss VAN RENSSELAER, Miss BREESE, Miss MALCOLM, and my sister, afterwards Mrs. OSTROM, entered upon the work. The only survivor is Miss BREESE, (now Mrs. GRISWOLD,) who is at present in Europe with Professor S. F. B. MORSE, who married her daughter. The school was opened in a room of Miss OLIVE WHITE, an excellent member of the First Church, who lived in Hotel street. Pupils of all ages were admitted, and without distinction of color. The plan of instruction at first was of course very crude. There probably were others engaged in the work, but I cannot remember their names.

It was at least two years after the establishment of this school before I took any part in the work, being then but sixteen years of age. In the year 1820 I removed to this city, and of course can give no information of the Sabbath School work in Utica since that time. I have the impression that my sister prepared a history of her connection with the school up to a period not long before her death.

If my memory serves me, the first "question book" ever published, was prepared by Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, and published at Utica. This plan, as you know, was adopted by the American Sunday School Union, and almost universally introduced into the schools under its care.

Allow me to say, that after a residence in this city of forty-six years, during which time I have been familiar with the anxiety of Christian men to find a solution to the problem, "How to evangelize the masses," I have

come to the settled conviction that the true place is to reach the children of the neglected and degraded classes by Sabbath School instruction, connected with efforts to improve their temporal condition. Let this plan be carried out affectionately, earnestly, and perseveringly, and with the blessing of God, in *one generation* we shall see wonderful results.

Yours respectfully,

WILLIAM WALKER.

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*From Spencer Kellogg, Esq.*

UTICA, October 18, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, ESQ., *Superintendent, &c.*:

DEAR SIR,—

Since the first announcement of the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sabbath School connected with our Society, I have felt inclined to relate some incidents that transpired during the forty years that I was associated with that institution as a teacher in the Sabbath School or Bible Class, but many difficulties came before my mind, which it seemed hard to overcome; the most trying of these were my advanced age, and the absence of memory to recall many interesting events that transpired during my connection with that association, and not until Col. WILLIAMS (your father,) was brought before my mind, could I be induced to undertake a task so arduous. There are certain things that change the current of events; I feel that it is not only a pleasure, but a duty, to bear testimony to his Christian devotion to the children and youth connected with that institution; and not alone with the Sabbath School, but with the sick and afflicted throughout this community. In confirmation of his self-sacrificing devotion to the sick and afflicted, I trust it will not be considered irrelevant or out of place to refer to a few incidents (with which I was perfectly familiar,) connected with his history. During the cholera, in 1832, in this city, Col. WILLIAMS, E. S. COZIER, Esq., and myself, were appointed a committee,

by the Board of Health, to look after the sick. In less than forty-eight hours, one of the committee, Mr. COZIER, was attacked with the disease, and lived but a few hours. The epidemic rapidly increased, and the people became alarmed, and were fleeing from the city, and it became utterly impossible to get help to take care of the sick and dying. We had just left the death-bed of Mr. BURCHARD, and were standing on the side walk in Whitesboro street, consulting what course to pursue, and what to do. Brother WILLIAMS made this expression, we must devote all our energies, our strength, and if need be our lives to aid the sick and the distressed, and look to Divine Providence for relief. Many were entreating us for help, but we did not know how nor where to obtain it. At this moment of anguish and almost of despair, we were greeted by a committee appointed by about forty young men who had met and passed resolutions tendering their services to aid the sick and distressed, and the names of the young men were attached to the resolutions presented. While memory lasts, I shall never forget the feelings of Brother WILLIAMS on receiving that document. Sighs and tears were the only expression he could give. If my recollection is correct, Judge BACON was Chairman of that committee, and most of those young men who offered their services were faithful in fulfilling their resolutions. I could relate many interesting incidents connected with the former teachers in our Sabbath School, but my remarks have already been too much extended. Most of these teachers have finished their labors on earth, and I trust have entered into that rest which is the inheritance of those who love and serve God. With a sincere desire and an earnest prayer that the blessing of God may be with you, and the institution over which you preside,

I remain, as ever, yours truly.

SPENCER KELLOGG.

*From Frederic S. Winston, Esq.*

NEW YORK, *October 8, 1866.*

HON. JOHN F. SEYMOUR, *Utica, N. Y.*

MY DEAR SIR :

I thank you heartily for your kind invitation to the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church of your city, to be held during the present month.

You say "your scholars call for you." What memories this call awakens! Forty years have passed since these scholars clustered around a youthful teacher only a little older than themselves, to listen to the simple instructions he was able to give. Since then they have separated, some faithfully to preach the gospel, which they then began to learn, some in our own country and some among the heathen, while some adorn the bench and bar, and others in business pursuits, and all I trust and believe illustrating the pure principles they then received from the written word of God.

I well remember my first introduction to the school, and to my scholars. While a youth of seventeen, a clerk in the mercantile house of DOOLITTLE & GOLD, I lodged in their store, as was then the custom in your city. On one Sunday morning as I passed into Genesee street, I was met by Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, who took me by the arm inviting me to go with him, and saying that he had something for me to do. He was then in the vigor of his manhood, an officer in the church, at the head of the military organization of the city, and often called upon to direct the Fire Department, and in other emergencies requiring unusual self-possession, energy, and intelligence. Such was the magnetism and attractiveness of his manner, and my veneration for his character, that I cheerfully gave myself up to his guidance and direction. He led me to the Sunday School, then in 1823 held in the public school room near the canal, of which he was Superintendent, and Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE the Assistant. They immediately collected

for me a class of little boys, whose bright and intelligent countenances, and nervous susceptibilities are as freshly pictured upon my memory as if the scene was of yesterday. That they interested me far more than I could them, you will readily believe when I tell you that among these children were ALEXANDER S. JOHNSON, JOHN H. EDMONDS, JAMES M. HOYT, ALEXANDER SEWARD, ERASTUS CLARK, EDWARD BRIGHT, HENRY S. LANSING, W. FREDERIC WILLIAMS, and many others whose names are familiar to the public at home and abroad, and honored wherever known. Some may have fallen asleep but most yet survive to be for many years, I trust, both blest and a blessing.

This school early took rank as one of the best conducted, most efficient and intelligent in the country. I believe the first book of Scripture Questions for Sunday Schools, was compiled by Mr. PARMELE about this time, and used in the school. The school attracted much attention, and many visitors from abroad, and did much towards the rapid advance of the cause in usefulness and in public estimation. I well remember the first public exhibition of the Sunday School, from the necessity thrown upon me of preparing the address which was spoken by JAMES M. HOYT, of my class. He has delivered many of his own since, and all abler than this, at the bar, in public assemblies, and in the pulpit, and with more mature and finished eloquence; but few or none where eye and heart sympathized as they then did with the youthful speaker. All the exercises were most appropriate and successful, and inaugurated a system of public Sunday School exhibitions in this country which is now nearly universal.

Soon afterwards I left your city to reside in New York, and immediately took a class of colored adults and children in a Sunday School attached to St. George's Church, then under the charge of the Rev. Dr. MILNOR.

It has been my privilege since, on each Sunday, either as a teacher of a Bible class, or as a Superintendent, or of late years as a visitor of the inmates of our Orphan and other Asylums and public institutions of this city, to

use the knowledge and experience I obtained in the Sunday School in Utica and elsewhere, in imparting to children and others that knowledge from the word of God which is profitable for this life and that which is to come.

That I have been able to endure the unremitting pressure of mental and physical labor, without relaxation, which has fallen to my lot for so many years, has been a matter of surprise to those who do not know by experience how heart and brain are refreshed and renovated in passing from earthly pursuits to higher and sacred aims and efforts on the Sabbath. Let no man in health excuse himself from the duty of teaching on the Sabbath because he needs mental rest. If he has a heart for the work and a real sympathy for the persons for whom he is working, the labor will be rest. He will need no other.

Greatly regretting that my other duties will not admit of my attending this most interesting anniversary, or allow me time for anything beyond this hasty letter,

I am, yours, very truly,

F. S. WINSTON.

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*From James M. Hoyt, Esq.*

CLEVELAND, October 18, 1866.

DEAR SIR:

In looking back over nearly half a century, I seem to be seated, a tender child, in a group around GEORGE S. WILSON, (long since in heaven,) as our teacher. There were WELLS WILLIAMS, GEORGE WALKER, JOHN H. EDMONDS, GURDON BURCHARD, HOVEY CLARKE, THOMAS ALLEN CLARKE, JAMES DANA, and others, who were associated under Mr. WILSON as the "Juvenile Society."

The fragrance of prayers,—affectionate counsels,—readings in our meetings of books selected by our teacher,—and a magical but indescribable personal influence which attached us to Mr. WILSON,—still envelops my heart. It has been to me as the dew and the sunlight through many years of labor.



Were the group I have named once more together, (which cannot be in this world, for some have gone higher,) we would as one, freighted with rich and tender memories, arise and call **GEORGE S. WILSON** blessed. Another notable feature at the fountain head of your noble school was **TRUMAN PARMELE**,—its first, and ever honored Superintendent. He was aided, as Assistant having charge of the girls, by **Mrs. CLARKE**—the mother of **HOVEY CLARKE**. Some years later I was highly privileged in being in the class of **FREDERIC S. WINSTON** to whom you refer. His grand career as a Sabbath School laborer was most faithfully opened. I remember one Sabbath morning, in his class, in the old Lancasterian school building, on Catharine street, long since displaced I think by the canal basin connected with **Mr. PLATT'S** warehouse, (for your school was then held there,) the tender and loving influence of **Mr. WINSTON** melted me to tears for my sins, and led me, I have thought, then, perhaps first of all, to Jesus as my Saviour. Have I not reason to bless the influence of your Sabbath School?

It may be of interest to some to state that perhaps the earliest place of meeting of your school was in the second story of an old wooden building on the corner of Broad street, (north side,) and Genesee. I remember being taken by my eldest sister, (afterwards **Mrs. HUMPHREY**, of Albany,) whose influence upon me was beyond expression valuable, up into that room. We were seated on a plain wooden bench running around the room, with our backs to the wall. That was the day of small things. I believe that was the first Sabbath School gathered west of Albany, and now what a great and glorious army in our populous and mighty Northwest!

But I must not detain you. I would love to say much more of **Mr. PARMELE**, and others I have named; but your time will be limited, and there will be fresher memories, (though none more hallowed,) within the reach of most of those who will be with you at your Jubilee. I am not an old man; but my tale outruns the time of the present gen-

eration. May the blessed Master be with you; and amid hallowed memories, Christian labors, and heavenly hopes, may time bear onward with ever increasing volume the First Presbyterian Sabbath School of Utica.

Truly yours,

JAMES M. HOYT.

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*From T. P. Handy, Esq.*

CLEVELAND, October 18, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have hoped, until this late day, to be present with you on the interesting occasion of your Fiftieth Sunday School Anniversary. My engagements at home will compel me to forego this pleasure. I could only say, were I with you, that more than 40 years ago, I attended the First Presbyterian Church Sunday School, at the request of an esteemed uncle, TRUMAN PARMELE, then the efficient Superintendent of the school, but soon after, on removing to New Hartford, I had an acquaintance with but few of its teachers and scholars. The names of GEORGE S. WILSON, TRUMAN PARMELE, and Mrs. OSTROM, with others then actively engaged in it, will ever be remembered by me with peculiar interest.

My Sunday school life, as well as my business life, were each shaped in Utica, and if I have accomplished any thing during these 40 years as superintendent and teacher, I owe it, under God, to the impressions made on my mind by these noble teachers. My location in Cleveland arose from committing to memory, when quite young, some portions of the Bible, and repeating them to Rev. HENRY DWIGHT, then Pastor of the First Church. By means of a little tract he gave me, I was afterwards placed under his employ in the Bank of Geneva, and so guided here, where I was enabled to invite Rev. S. C. AIKEN, and others, from Utica, to remove to this city. I mention these incidents, to show how a kind Providence, by these apparent slight agencies, shapes the course of our lives. I owe much of my worldly success to the Sunday School, and to the kindly influences

received in Utica; but more than all, am I indebted to it, for the maturing of a Christian experience, and an increased love for the study of God's word, during these past years.

I must not extend my remarks, for you will have other and richer experiences before you. I should love to tell you of the precious influence of MAYNARD, who came from your school, who lived long enough to sing and die in Cleveland. I could point to the dying bed of this and that Sunday school child, from among our Mission schools, who have passed away, singing some of his beautiful hymns in their last moments, and hoping to see "dear Mr. MAYNARD in heaven."

Oh! What precious memories! What untold influences may we exert in this delightful work! Who can know in this life their extent and power for good! *Fifty years* of Sunday School labor! Eternity only can reveal the results, and enable us to know what has been accomplished.

Say to the dear teachers and friends of your Sunday School, that I deem it an honor to be still a fellow laborer with them, and that I intend to remain so, while life lasts.

I remain also, dear brother,

Yours, with Christian esteem,

T. P. HANDY.

*From Samuel Wright, Esq.*

LOCKPORT, N. Y., October 17, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, Esq., *Chairman of Committee:*

I fear that the press of other duties will not allow me to respond in person to your invitation. I have no reminiscences of any value to give. Under such teachers as WALTER KING and WILLIAM J. BACON, my Bible Class exercises could not be otherwise than profitable. Not doubting that your reunion will prove a pleasant one,

I remain

Truly your obliged,

SAMUEL WRIGHT.

*From S. Wells Williams.*

PEKING, CHINA, May 31, 1866.

*To the Superintendents, Teachers and Scholars of the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church, Utica.*

DEAR FRIENDS:

The heading of this letter suggests a great variety of thoughts connected with your school;—its teachers and scholars of former years; the half-dozen houses where it was gathered, and my classmates and fellow-teachers, all recur to me; but the leading emotion in my mind, is one of gratitude to God for the great privilege of having been in the school at all. No doubt this emotion is strengthened by the contrast I daily see around me of the condition of thousands, who not only have no school to go to, but no Sabbath either; and who grow up to learn and do evil only; their condition when compared with yours and mine, adds new light to the declaration, "Of those to whom much is given, much will be required."

My first remembrance of the Sunday School was standing up in a row, with many other children, to say our catechism, and sing one of WATTS' children's hymns. The school was then held in a room called the Minerva Hall, at the north corner of Genesee and Broad streets, in the third story of the building. Not long after, it was removed to a room in Catharine street, where it remained a few years, and where it began to be one of the most attractive places to every scholar, under the care of TRUMAN PARMELE, who soon drew towards him the affection of the boys. This excellent man became the Superintendent while I was a young scholar, and remained in the post during all my connection with the school, as such. His influence over the boys was of the purest and strongest kind; and his memory, I have no doubt, remains in each of their minds as one of its best inheritances. It was his aim to make the scholars love their lessons, and regard the Sunday School as a pleasant place for all who came to it. The morning school opened at 8½ o'clock, and the afternoon session immediately

after church was out; the two sessions comprising about four hours. In the morning, the lessons were recited to, and explained by the teachers in each class; and in the afternoon, the Superintendent questioned the school at large. It was a point of emulation to answer each question instantly, and to repeat the verses of the lesson perfectly. Some boys learned much more than they otherwise would, in order that they might be able to answer at the afternoon examination; and the exercise made all more familiar with the words and meaning of Scripture. Occasionally the school was collected in the church on Sabbath evening for a general examination, when some of the boys spoke suitable pieces, and others received rewards for diligence and good conduct. I remember myself receiving a book on one of these occasions, with some surprise, for having learned the New Testament through.

One of the teachers, named JAMES GARRETT, went as a missionary printer to Ceylon and Bombay, from whence he afterwards sent a small copper idol, and a pair of charms of some sort, with descriptions of heathen ceremonies, which Mr. PARMELE explained. One of the Assistant Superintendents was CHARLES STUART, who had been an officer in India, and frequently told the school about the rites of the Hindoos, so that, altogether, we were made acquainted with the sad condition of those who know not God in pagan lands, and willingly contributed our cents to send them His word.

After a while, the school was removed to the session room in Hotel street. A system of lessons, adopted on the plan of a harmony of the gospels, was introduced in connection with the Bible class, taught between the morning and afternoon services, which gave a clearer idea of the life of Christ than any other way, and made us familiar with the history and geography of Judea. Mr. CHARLES BARTLETT was Assistant Superintendent for a good part of the time in Hotel street, and possessed a happy faculty of explaining the lesson. I well remember the solemnity with which he told us one afternoon, that one of the boys, JOHN RICE, had

given his heart to God,—the first conversion in the school ; but still more vividly do I remember seeing the tears in Mr. PARMELE'S eyes, after he had been explaining the lesson, soon after that Sabbath, and urging the scholars to love the Saviour “right away.” It was his earnest desire to take them all to heaven with him.

I became a teacher in the school after its removal to the basement of the church in Washington street, and have as pleasant a recollection of this part of my Sunday School life as when I was a scholar. Though I have not much knowledge of the subsequent history of my scholars, I am sure that if they derived half the benefit from my instructions that I did in trying to teach them, we have both much reason to thank God for the Sabbath School. I cannot too strongly impress upon you the importance of *thoroughly* learning the words, and studying the meaning of God's Holy Book, as a guide and guard during your future life. It preserves the heart in purity, and fixes the mind in its purposes of industry, rectitude and holy desires to do good to others, better than any human words or teaching.

I could perhaps enhance your ideas of the high privileges you enjoy in having a Sunday School to attend, with all the blessed influences it promotes, by comparing them with the condition of the people and children around me. Though the Chinese possess many of the comforts of life, and are superior to many other pagan nations in their institutions, their condition only shows how impossible it is for mankind, unaided by the teachings and awful sanctions of God's law and gospel, to rise from their pollution and deceit, and obtain even the temporal happiness of people in Christian countries. But you have this comparison already made in the New Testament, and you need only be assured that what Paul and Peter wrote almost 2,000 years ago, is just as true now ; to feel strongly that it is your highest privilege and duty to do all you can to send the knowledge and blessings which you have to them. When I bade good by, with sorrowing heart, to the friends standing around the packet-boat, at Genesee street bridge, just thirty-three

years ago to-day, I had a partial idea of the honor and joy attending the mission work; but I am now sure that I would make the same choice, (if I could,) again. I hope that the same pains to teach the sad condition of the heathen, and interest the children in every effort to help those who are trying to send them the gospel, is taken now, that Mr. PARMELE used to take; we were then fully informed of all that was done, especially by American missionaries.

I am not aware that there is a single person now connected with the school, that was in it when I left it in 1833; and as my love and regard for it grew out of my humble, sincere thanks, that God permitted me to belong to it so long, so I still pray that He would bless all who belong to it with his forgiveness and grace. Peace be with you.

S. WELLS WILLIAMS.

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*From Prof. James D. Dana.*

NEW HAVEN, CONN., *October 16, 1866.*

DEAR SIR:

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church, calls up many pleasant memories of Sunday School days, and of our most excellent Superintendent TRUMAN PARMELE. I do not think of any incidents that it is worth while here to mention. But I may say that I have daily reason for thankfulness to God for the instruction there received. I was not led, while in the school, I regret to say, to become a Christian, but the influences of the school remained with me, and later, they were among the means which brought me to Christ, and the knowledge of the joys of his love.

That God's blessing may ever remain with the Sunday School, its teachers and its scholars, is the prayer of one of its grateful scholars of over forty years since.

JAMES D. DANA.

*From Mrs. Sarah A. Ball.*

BROOKLYN, *September 22, 1866.*

MY DEAR SIR :

The idea of the Semi-Centennial has touched a chord in memory's cell, which vibrates to my innermost soul, and awakens sensations known only to one who has passed through the vicissitudes of fifty years, and then is requested to look back at the pride and joy of her youth. Many attendant circumstances of interest have faded in this lapse of time, yet clearly as yesterday, the leading points (of our then novel undertaking,) remain indelibly fixed. I was recently relating an interesting portion of my life to one of my children. In September of that year, two daughters of the late Mrs. BETHUNE were on a tour of pleasure westward—while being hospitably entertained at the residence of JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER, at that time one of the most prominent citizens of Utica, ever foremost in his contributions to public charity—and most liberally dispensing to all the comforts with which he was surrounded. These ladies advocated, warmly, the plan of Sunday School teaching, and proposed to his daughters to make an effort with their associates in this labor of love. Inspired by their enthusiastic feelings on the subject, *we*, a youthful band of sisters in Christ, (our ages being from fourteen to sixteen,) pledged ourselves to commence our task—heart and hands—with a unity of purpose, *worthy* of remembrance, and strong determination to go forward, in spite of obstacles which might arise, and natural want of confidence in the public mind, that our abilities would not be adequate to carry out our well meaning intentions. But I have no recollections of a fear crossing our minds as to the result, for were we not in the midst of an enlightened community, many of whom had but lately entered the Christian race, therefore we knew, with God's blessing, we should be both assisted and encouraged. To work we went, calling on individuals for small contributions in money; on the stores for clothing, that the children might be decently clothed. This gave



rise to a Dorcas Society in connection. Then we left no part of the village, from the ascent of the hill to the borders of the Mohawk, without searching for children who needed instruction; some gladly promised attendance. To those not feeling their necessity, we held out inducements. Our preparations completed—a school room on Hotel street was selected as a central location. I should say our first gathering numbered thirty scholars, with five teachers—Miss BLOODGOOD, from the Episcopal Church, having volunteered her services. After a while, colored adults were admitted, who from their great anxiety to learn, were soon in a good state of improvement. These were under the care of Miss CORNELIA VAN RENSSELAER and Miss EUNICE CAMP. The school increasing rapidly, we selected the latter to superintend the whole. In the course of time, a few gentlemen of the congregation came to our aid, forming a separate school for boys. With increasing satisfaction, during a period of seven years, I was connected with the school, it flourished beyond our warmest expectations—much visible good was effected—and parting from my scholars was one among many regrets, at leaving a spot so justly dear to me. I feel I have only feebly responded to your requisition. You will please accept my grateful thanks for the invitation. That I have been *remembered* is a source of pleasure. Should nothing unforeseen occur, you may calculate on my being present at the anniversary. I presume few are remaining of my old associates.

SARAH A. BALL

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*From Howard L. Parmele.*

NEW YORK, *October 11, 1866.*

REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D. :

DEAR SIR,—

My mother writes you in reply to your kind letter. She, and we all, are touched at the remembrances you call up. Nothing that I can add, would deepen the response she has sought to convey in that letter to you. Allow me to ask

that you will return the notice of my father's death, enclosed. It is a simple scrip of paper, but it has been for twenty years preserved by my mother. It was written by J. A. MAYBIN, Esq., senior elder of the First Presbyterian Church at New Orleans.

May God bless your Sabbath School, and the cause throughout the world. Next to the divinely appointed church of God, it is performing its sacred work.

We should be pleased to hear further from the church and school under your charge. Believe me, dear sir, respectfully yours,  
HOWARD L. PARMELE.

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*From Mrs. Susan Burchard Taintor.*

BROOKLYN, October 16, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:

April, 1824, I took a class in the Sabbath School in Utica. Several different denominations were united in the school which was held in a room on Hotel street. Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE and CHARLES BARTLETT were Superintendents of the Male Department, and Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE and Miss BETSEY BARKER of the Female. April, 1825, I went to Buffalo, on a visit, returned in October, and took the same class. In February, 1826, during a revival of religion, was led to feel that I was a "blind leader of the blind," and trust I was led to a saving faith in Christ, and united with the First Presbyterian church, Rev. Mr. AIKEN, Pastor. After the school was divided and removed to the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, I retained the same class, until 1828, when I was appointed Assistant Superintendent, associated with Miss BARKER, who was Superintendent. In 1829, Mrs. OSTROM, having been out of the school some time, came in, and took a class. I resigned my office to her and took her class for a few months, when Miss BARKER left the school, and Mrs. OSTROM was appointed Superintendent in her place, and I was appointed Assistant. In 1830, Mrs. OSTROM left the school, and I was appointed Superintendent, with Miss

TRACY and Miss KIRKLAND, as Assistants. In October, 1832, I went to Buffalo, and Miss LOUISA KIRKLAND was appointed Superintendent. In April, 1833, I returned and took a class, but was soon appointed Assistant with Miss KIRKLAND. After Miss KIRKLAND left the school, Mrs. AIKEN and Mrs. WILLIAM CLARKE, took the Superintendency, and I remained as Assistant. In 1835, Mrs. OSTROM was again appointed Superintendent, and I remained as Assistant till November, 1835, when I went to Buffalo. In October, 1836, I returned to Utica, and took a class for a short time, but was soon appointed Assistant Superintendent, with Mrs. LANSING, and when the Male and Female Departments were united, Mrs. LANSING left, and I was appointed Superintendent of the Female Department, associated with Mr. JOHN F. SEYMOUR, who was Superintendent. After the Male and Female Departments were united, an Infant Class was formed in the ladies' room, and Mrs. OSTROM had charge of it, with an Assistant. In March, 1842, Mrs. OSTROM was called to attend a sick brother, and I was appointed Superintendent of the Infant Department.

In April, 1844, I went to Buffalo, and in the fall of 1846, returned to Utica, had a class till May, 1847; went to Buffalo, and from there to Chicago. Spent a year in Cleveland, and had a class in Dr. AIKEN's Church Sabbath School, also had a class in Buffalo and Chicago when there. In 1856, on my way from Chicago to New York, spent a Sabbath in Utica, and was present at the Fortieth Anniversary of the Sabbath School. In February, 1857, I was married to Mr. CHARLES TAINTOR, and went to Buffalo to reside—took a class in the Sabbath School. In March, 1864, my husband was taken away by death, and my home broken up. In September, 1864, I went to Brooklyn to reside with my brother, and united with Rev. Mr. CUYLER's Church, and took a class in the Sabbath School. I hope to be present at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sabbath School in Utica, and to meet with many with whom I have been associated in the Sabbath School there.

Many of those with whom I have been engaged in labors

of love there, have gone to their reward, and while we cherish the memory of their Christian example, may we not be weary in well doing, but as we still have opportunity to labor, let us strive earnestly to advance the cause of Christ, and show our love to him by feeding the lambs of his fold. I feel that I owe much to the influence of Sabbath School associations, and the remembrance of them is refreshing.

The names of the first class I had charge of, are as follows: HARRIET DANA, now Mrs. JONES; SARAH WILLIAMS, now Mrs. WOOD; LUCRETIA MERRELL, Mrs. GEORGE CAMP, deceased; SARAH LOTHROP, unknown to me; JANE DONALDSON, do.; MARGARET RANDALL, do.; CATHARINE BUTLER, do.; MARY WHITELEY, now Mrs. KNOX; MARY SCHERMERHORN, married, and lives West. I had charge of several other classes for a short time, and have many pleasant remembrances connected with my labors in the Sabbath School in Utica, and in going from place to place, I have often met with those with whom I was associated there, and I could name many, but will not attempt to record the names of all. Some are still engaged in the good work, while others have been called to a higher service.

Miss BETSEY BARKER, and Miss WELLS, now Mrs. BALLOU, are the only teachers that I know of, living in Utica, that were in the school when I first entered, in 1824. Most of the present teachers are strangers to me. Some of them I remember as scholars in the Sabbath School, and others in my *day school*, among them Mr. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, the present Superintendent, (and his wife,) whose parents I remember with special interest and affection; also his brothers, WELLS and FREDERICK, long engaged in the Missionary work. I had a very interesting letter from WELLS last winter, in answer to one written by me, introducing my son to his acquaintance. He refers to the Sunday School and old associations there with interest.

With my best wishes and prayers for the continued prosperity of the school, I close this report.

SUSAN TAINTOR.

*From A. Merrell.*

GENEVA, *October 18, 1866.*

R. S. WILLIAMS, ESQ., *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR,—

It would give me great pleasure, were my time not pre-occupied, to attend the celebration of the Fiftieth Semi-centennial Anniversary of the Sabbath School, to which, when a child, I belonged. My reminiscences, however, are too limited, to be of any service in preparing your report. I remember Mr. ROBERTS as my teacher, and how, with childlike simplicity, I looked up to him as a model of all that was true and good. I remember Rev. Mr. AIKEN, as pastor, and how I regarded him with a reverence akin to fear, and I *think* I remember Mr. TRACY, as Superintendent of the Sabbath School. The death of my grandfather, JOHN CAMP, during the ravages of cholera in 1832, made a deep impression on my mind, and I longed to talk with some one about my soul, but did not *dare* to. Little EMILY HOLBROOK, my sister's playmate, also died very suddenly, at the age of eight,—two years older than myself, producing a similar impression and like result. It was not till after I had become of age, that I began to hope in Christ. But I record these facts, because I think teachers do not sufficiently *draw out* the *hearts* of the children. I may have been naturally more timid than the generality of children, yet I have no doubt, from my own experience in teaching, that the hearts which *apparently* are *least affected*, are frequently the most ready to break.

Hoping you will have a prosperous reunion for body and soul, I remain, very respectfully, your brother,

A. MERRELL

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*From J. M. Lyons.*

NEW YORK, *September 19, 1866.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

I received your notice and invitation to attend the Anniversary of the Sabbath School of the First Presbyterian

Church of Utica. It should have met with an earlier reply, but owing to sickness, and a sudden death in the neighborhood, it was neglected.

Please receive my many thanks for your kind invitation, and nothing, I assure you, would afford me more pleasure than to be present with you at that celebration; and Oh, I cannot tell you how happy I am to-day, to think that my name is enrolled among the members of that school to which I owe so much! Oh, it is a glorious cause! Go on and be faithful; work while the day lasts, and when time with us shall end, may we all be so happy as to have our names enrolled in the Lamb's book of life.

Among the members of that school were six of our family, of which only four are living, all of whom are living in the enjoyment of religion. My eldest sister LUCY ANN, is with me. She too, would like to join with you in celebrating the Sabbath School of her earliest days, of which she has many fond recollections, and much to praise God for. At the time we attended the school, MARY E. WALKER, afterwards Mrs. OSTROM, was Superintendent, and Miss SUSAN WALKER, Teacher. My sister also remembers Mrs. CLARKE as former Superintendent. My brother, who was also a member of Mr. NORTH's class, has in his possession a little Testament that was given him, when a little boy, ten years of age, by his teacher. He prizes it very highly. He told me the other day, that that book had been his guide through life, and that he hoped finally to meet you all in that happy land, where parting should be no more.

I could write pages upon the subject of Sabbath Schools, had I time. To-day my time is limited, and I shall be obliged to close, hoping that we may all be reunited in the bonds of love, when Christ shall come to make up his jewels, is the sincere desire of

Your friend,

J. M. LYONS.

*From Charles C. Curtis.*

NEW YORK, October 19, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, ESQ., *Chairman of Committee on Fiftieth Anniversary First Presbyterian Church Sunday School:*

DEAR SIR,—

Your Circular, with its kind invitation, was promptly received, and should have been answered sooner, but my time has been so fully occupied, that it was impossible.

I should be much gratified to be with you upon the interesting occasion, but my duties will not allow that happiness.

I was surprised that my name should appear upon your roll, as it is near, if not quite, thirty years since I attended your school. Your record and rolls must have been well kept, and admirably preserved.

My recollections of the detail of the school are very faint, therefore, I cannot give you any information of value. I am not certain, but I am under the impression that Mr. GEO. D. FOSTER was my teacher.

The reception of your Circular sent a thrill through me, reviving recollections, that lay dormant. I was carried back to the time when our family lived under the shadow of the old church, and I, in a measure, realized my childhood impressions of that old edifice, its seeming grandeur and immensity, nothing in the shape of architecture which I have since seen, has had the effect upon my mind as the old church had upon my childhood thoughts, and the impression is indelible. I can now see it in my mind's eye, with its tall, graceful spire, its high steps, and its plain, formidable base. When I heard of its destruction, I mourned as though I had lost a friend.

My own experience proves that good seed, sown early, will not be entirely lost.

Twenty-five years ago, I came to this great city, entirely free from all family influence, boarding in hotels and large boarding houses, surrounded by all kinds of evil influences, and for a number of years gave myself up to all its

seductive influence. But in the course of time, the beneficent influence of the Holy Spirit came to the rescue. The early lessons received were not dead, but asleep—and they were aroused. I again entered God's holy temple, and listened with delight at the sound of the "glad tidings" therein proclaimed. Soon after I took a class in the Sunday School, and now have the pleasure of being a Superintendent of a Mission School, which is a live school and growing, and I hope with the help of divine inspiration to be of some benefit to the good cause.

Hoping your anticipations of a glorious meeting and Anniversary will be more than realized,

I remain, your brother in Christ,

CHARLES C. CURTIS.

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*From Rev. Charles S. Porter.*

BOSTON, October 19, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR:

It would give me great pleasure to be present at the Fiftieth Anniversary of your Sabbath School. My engagements, I regret to say, make it impracticable. The lapse of more than twenty years has of course obliterated many of the impressions made upon my mind by incidents during my pastorate. The Sabbath School was then large and flourishing, through the zeal and diligence of a corps of able officers and teachers, most of whom we trust have now gone to that higher school, where with kindred spirits and many of their former pupils they no longer "see through a glass darkly," but face to face with the Master and each other. The seed-time of the last fifty years has been attended and followed with the ingathering of souls in the church below and above, the garnered fruit of "line upon line," with many prayers and tears. No labor in the Lord shall be in vain. The review of the past from your *earthly stand-point* may have a counterpart at the high post



of observation in heaven, with a host of interested witnesses *there*. So far as your *record* reads well *below*, it will read better *above*. My interest in your school has never ceased, and I trust never will until called to report to Him whose judgment will not be based upon our *failure* or *success*, but upon our *faithfulness*. May Heaven smile upon your interesting and important convocation, and make the next half-century a thousand fold more abundant in labors, with corresponding saving results.

With assurances of my warmest affection for your pastor and the members of my flock, I remain ever,

Yours in the Lord.

CHARLES S. PORTER.

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*From Jane L. Hardy.*

ITHACA, October 8, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee, &c.,*

DEAR SIR:

My mother, Mrs. C. E. HARDY, wishes me to acknowledge the invitation extended to her, to attend the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of your Sabbath School on the 20th and 21st of October, and to express her regret that she is unable to accept it. She also wishes me to say, that her connection with the school was so brief, and when she was herself so young, that she could recall no incidents that would be of any interest.

I unite with her in the hope, that this interesting reunion may be in every respect as successful as you could wish it.

The memory of my dear aunt, Mrs. OSTROM, is so enwoven with the school that she loved, that that alone would make it near to us.

Could I at this time conveniently leave here, I think upon the plea that I once for six or eight months filled the position of substitute teacher in the school, I should be inclined to appropriate, and use, my mother's invitation; but I must be content, with wishing you a happy and memorable day.

Very respectfully,

JANE L. HARDY.

*From Dr. M. M. Bagg.*

UTICA, *October 15, 1866.*

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR :

Desirous to contribute a portion, however small, to the interest of this occasion, I feel constrained to jot down a few items which memory brings back to me in relation to the earlier days of the school. And though others of more vivid recollections, or whose experience dates further back than my own, may proffer more, I may perchance have gleaned something which they have failed to present.

My earliest recollection of this Sunday School is of attending a single session, while it was held at the Lancaster School House, on Catharine Street, opposite Franklin, on the site now occupied by Lennebacker & Co.'s furniture ware-rooms. Of this meeting I can recall nothing except the position of the furniture the room contained; my impressions having probably been swallowed up by the exciting intelligence with which the scholars were greeted immediately on the close of the school, of a crime that had just been committed in the upper part of the village.

My next recollection is of an annual meeting or exhibition of the school, which was held in the earliest or wooden church on Washington Street, on a Sunday evening. The scholars were seated in the square pews in front of the pulpit of that curiously arranged edifice; curious, I say, so different was it from any church I have since seen, for the pulpit was on the right hand or north side, while the pews were for the most part so placed as to look, one half westward and one-half eastward, a few square ones only being immediately in front of the desk, and a few long ones under the chorister's gallery on the south side. The exercises of the evening consisted, in part, of the enumeration by the scholars, of the numerous titles given our Saviour in the Scriptures, each class being called on for its quota. Though I presume that from my position in one of these

square pews, I must have been a scholar at this time, I cannot tell who was my teacher nor who my classmates.

My remembrances of a somewhat later date become more distinct, for I was now installed as a regular member of the Sabbath School which was held in Hotel Street, while the new brick structure on Washington Street was in process of erection. This was a wooden two story building that had, I believe, previously formed a part of the original church of Washington Street, and stood on the west side of Hotel, opposite a lane which still exists. The school-room was in the second story, occupying the whole width of the building, and was reached by a staircase leading up on the outside of the south wall. The desk of the Superintendent was opposite the door, and the classes were ranged on the right and left. The class to which I belonged was seated in the north-east corner.

Herein begin my clearer remembrances of a prosperous and interesting school, with a full corps of zealous and useful teachers. Among the more prominent ones, were our excellent Superintendent, the pleasant-faced, warm-hearted, and devotedly active TRUMAN PARMELE, and his partner and coadjutor in all good works, MILTON BRAYTON, the boy-loving and boy-beloved GEORGE S. WILSON,—of whose Juvenile Association I retain a few delightful reminiscences,—EDWARD BRIGHT, HENRY IVISON, BRIGGS W. THOMAS, EDWARD VERNON, GEORGE BURCHARD, &c. Among the ladies were Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, of whose day school I was long a member, and whose memory is so precious to all her pupils; she was so masculine in her understanding, so feminine in her instincts and loveliness—truest, best picture of a “strong-minded woman,” and Mrs. OSTROM, whose untiring assiduity even the present generation of scholars have not forgotten. My own teacher was Mr. SILAS CLARK, who was at that time a merchant in this city, and who afterwards removed to Watertown. I remember him as a quiet, cheerful, earnest man, punctual and faithful in his duties, and commanding the respect and affection of his class.

The spirited singing of the school I still recall; the vigor with which they brought out

"Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings," &c.,

I cannot forget, any more than I can the impressive words of a hymn then frequently sung, in which were enumerated the partings that must be felt at the last Great Day,

"Fathers and mothers there must part,  
Must part to meet no more," &c.

For the interest of the singing, the school was greatly indebted to Mr. THOMAS HASTINGS, who was frequently present, and who about this time gave us instruction in vocal music, in a room in the second story of a building near the lower corner of Genesee and Broad Streets, over Tillman & Benjamin's cabinet shop. I am informed by one who was a somewhat older scholar than myself, that the Sunday School itself was once held in this room, and probably near the very time to which I allude. My own recollections of it are of a singing school, and I can still see Mr. HASTINGS with his venerable-looking head bowed down in astonishing proximity to his notes, or wagging vigorously in unison with his ivory-headed cane, to mark the time for his lagging class. It was that same white head which confronted us every Sabbath in the old brick church, whenever we raised our eyes from the pulpit to the organ loft, and which seemed as essential to the ministrations of the sanctuary as did any minister who ever filled its pulpit.

It is mortifying to me that of the numerous incidents I must have witnessed in the Sunday School while it was still in Hotel Street, of the solemn appeals I must have heard from our faithful Superintendent, or from strangers who sometimes visited us, I can call back scarcely anything. One only of Mr. PARMELE's addresses now occurs to me, and notwithstanding it was made *apropos* of a very silly exploit of one of the boys, the solemn words elicited by the occurrence, as well as the story of the occurrence itself, remain indelibly impressed. This consisted in this boy

having, as he informed his teacher, endeavored to realize the pains of "the fire that is never quenched," by holding his finger as long as he could endure the suffering, in a lighted candle.

Nor yet have I much to say of the school as it was carried on after its removal to the new brick church, except that it was larger and seemed still more interesting, and that the female department now occupied a separate room.

I remained in connection with the school until I became a pupil of Mr. BARTLETT'S High School, whither I was dismissed. The certificate of dismissal, which I now have, is signed T. PARMELE, Superintendent, and bears date March 16, 1828. It certifies that I had been "a member of Utica Sunday School No. 1, since January, 1823, and was now regularly dismissed, and recommended to School No. 4."

Of my subsequent connection with the Bible Class of the First Presbyterian Church, and of my remembrance of the lucid expositions of Scripture truth by that very intelligent Biblical scholar, THOMAS E. CLARK, nor of my own brief service as a Sunday School teacher, I will not detain you to say more. Yours respectfully,

M. M. BAGG.

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*From Andrew A. Smith.*

NEW YORK, October 18, 1866.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I have been just dallying with the hope, and all the while encouraging it, that I might find a way out of my engagements towards Utica, in accordance with your kind invitation, and for this reason *only*, have delayed a response to it. My engagements have been, and are unusually many and pressing just at the time when I *want dearly* to go back to the old school, my only Sabbath School as a scholar. But I *must* yield to other calls, for they are such that *duty* points to them as more imperative than the gratification which the Utica visit would *personally* confer. I do not regret that duty is urgent, yet I do, that it may not also permit this added pleasure.

I well remember TRUMAN PARMELE, for he was too faithful, earnest, devoted, not to have clinched a hold upon my boyish memory that cannot be relaxed. And he stands out yet, a clearly defined, Christ-like man, in the shrine where dear old memories linger. But I was too young to retain much detail in regard to his work and methods; I cannot, therefore, give you particulars. Well and gratefully do I hold firmly, as I have done through all these intervening years, the form and face, the hand and heart of HENRY IVISON, one of my teachers—the first. Of the other, I have only the mere retention of a fact, viz: that he afterwards was *the* teacher; but HENRY IVISON was *my* teacher. He once, in late years, told me that he remembered well my being brought into the class by a lady, (how I have wished I knew *who*,) a little fellow, and that he put his hand (it is a large one,) on my head, and spoke to me words of kindness and welcome. The *words* are forgotten, but the pressure of that hand, and the kindness have remained. And I did, as I still do, love the noble Christian man and teacher. I always loved to go and meet him, and I loved as well to listen and be instructed, as I was under his loving, sympathetic, clear and faithful endeavors. I know that he held Jesus clearly and close to us; that he aimed ever to bring us as sinners to Him as the only Saviour. I honor him, for he was true to his calling, which he loved and magnified. Details in the class I do not seem to have carried in my little basket of memory. Only one event has been deeply imprinted on my mind. It was the sickness, death, and burial of FREDDY COZZENS. We loved him, and when sick, near to his end, we, all of the class, went to his bedside; and we tenderly carried him to his burial. It always clung to me, this whole scene, and his sweet, hopeful, triumphant death. I have never forgotten the face of his father. It was too winning to turn from. I believe this event was deeply and profitably impressed on the hearts of all the class.

There is just one incident in the life of TRUMAN PARMELE, that I do recall, and will relate. At one of our

Union Monthly Sunday School Teacher's meetings, in Brooklyn, a year or so before his decease, held in the lecture room of the First Presbyterian Church, as I entered the door, (I had been detained and was late,) a form I did not at once recognize, had the floor, and a voice which *did* sound familiar, was uttering sober, earnest thoughts. Soon after being seated, I knew who it was. He soon went on a kind of a mental visit among the teachers and some of the scholars who had been with him in the old First Church School. As he proceeded, I recognized one and another; my teacher was one of them. He told of what the living were doing, and what the dead had essayed to do. It was thrilling to me. He did not know me, nor dream that one of his old scholars was an eager listener there. When he sat down, though too full of emotion for clear utterance, I was impelled to rise, and in a very few words, put in my claim to that honored brotherhood. The effect on the audience was quick and intense, and when, soon after, the meeting closed, I was fairly borne on a multitude of hands to confront my old Superintendent, and be introduced to him there, with a perfect confusion of voices venting kind words of the boy as accrediting him to the fellowship of his long absent and stranger Superintendent. He was glad, as I was truly, for the unexpected meeting. He has reached his long loved home; and I am trying in my measure, with face *that way*, if I am not deceived, to get nearer and nearer, till I gain it through sovereign grace, too. I do thank God for these and other dear friends of His and mine too, that have helped, or do help in the way thither. Not very long, and all of that band who have a hand in that of the Master, will have been led there too. The *glorious* gathering! Shall we *all* be there? At the *judicial* gathering, *all* will surely be,—“for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” All turns upon the fact whether or not we are in the *gracious* gathering, still progressing under the gospel call. “Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.”

My dear brother, shall we not, together, hope and pray,

and toil in faith, that the certain gathering of those remaining be not to judgment and condemnation, but to the Advocate and Refuge Eternal.

Most earnestly and truly, yours,

ANDREW A. SMITH.

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*From Mrs. Harriet Merrell.*

SACKETT'S HARBOR, October 12, 1866.

DEAR SIR :

Your kind invitation to attend your Semi-Centennial Anniversary is duly received. Of the many recollections and incidents connected with the school, which are fresh in my memory, I will relate only the following :

TRUMAN PARMELE was apprenticed at the early age of fourteen to my husband, ANDREW MERRELL, (or MERRELL & HASTINGS,) to learn the trade of bookbinding. At first he boarded with Mr. MERRELL, at TALCOTT CAMP'S, (my father's,) and father of JOHN CAMP and HENRY CAMP. At my marriage, TRUMAN boarded in our family, remaining until he was twenty-two years of age, a year after the expiration of his apprenticeship.

When he became an apprentice, he was not a Christian, though he was loved by all for his amiability and genial temper. When about seventeen years old he was attacked with typhus fever, and was brought near to death. Mr. EDWARD VERNON watched with him the very night of the crisis in his disease.

One day, when he had so far recovered as to make it allowable, but yet while he was still very weak, Mr. MERRELL went to his bedside and read to him the tract "Eternity;" then telling him how near he had been to that eternity, and reminding him that he had no preparation for it. The reading of the tract and the conversation which followed, resulted in TRUMAN PARMELE'S conversion.

Very respectfully yours,

HARRIET MERRELL.



*From Mary Anderson.*

PLYMOUTH, Oct. 17, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, ESQ., *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR,—

The invitation to attend the Anniversary Exercises of the Utica Sabbath School is received, and I regret exceedingly that I cannot be present on that occasion; however, I deem it a pleasure at this time, to recall my connection with the school. The four years in which I was engaged in teaching were most profitable to me, and my associations with teachers and scholars most delightful. I was favored with an intelligent and interesting class, and I had the vanity to think it the best in the school. When I commenced teaching, not one had experienced a hope in Christ, but during the revival under the preaching of Mr. HAMMOND, several of them were numbered with the people of God on earth, and one we believe is now numbered with the redeemed in heaven.

NELLIE POTTER lived but one year with us as a Christian, yet her life, so suddenly terminated, did not go out in darkness, as those can testify who stood by her bedside and heard her words of submission, and trust she is now far in advance of those who had the pleasure of teaching her. The precious hours spent in the school I shall never forget, and to those who know nothing of this happiness of the Sabbath School teacher, we can cordially say, "Come and see."

I am at present in the "Hoosier" State of Indiana, in a city called Plymouth, but as yet have seen neither *rock* nor *Puritan*. We have good preaching and good Sabbath Schools, in two of which I now teach, and should my teaching be successful, not a little of that success will be due to the influence of that piety and zeal, which so eminently characterized your school during my connection with it. It gives me great pleasure to be remembered among the teachers of your model school.

I am, very respectfully yours,

MARY ANDERSON.

*From John H. Edmonds, Esq.*

UTICA, October 20, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, Esq., *Chairman of Committee:*

MY DEAR SIR:

The first Sunday School in Utica was established in the year 1816. I was at the time too young to know any thing about it, but a few years afterwards I was permitted to enter the school as a scholar. This was in the year 1820, as near as I can remember, being then nine years of age, and I continued therein as a scholar many years. Then as I grew up, was made Secretary of the school, in which capacity I acted a few years, and afterwards was for a time one of the teachers. I should be unable from recollection to fix the date of my entrance into the school with any certainty, but I had in my possession for many years, and until quite recently, a leaf from my teacher's class book, in which, under the date of 1820, and for several months of that year, my name is entered, with a record of the number of verses of Scripture recited by me each Sunday. This leaf I have seen and examined within the last seven years, and regret that it is now lost or mislaid. It is possible I may have entered the school in 1819, and if so, was then only eight years old. But whichever year it may have been, I presume that I am, without doubt, one of the oldest surviving scholars of the school.

The record is of importance, chiefly, as showing the mode of instruction then pursued in the school, which I very distinctly remember, and that was, for the scholars to commit to memory during the week as many verses of Scripture as possible, and to recite the same to the teachers during the sessions of the school on Sunday. We were stimulated by promises of reward to increase the number of verses to the greatest possible extent, and the ambition of the boys was greatly excited to excel. The effect was really quite surprising, and I look upon it even now with wonder. My record shows that at the early age of nine years, I frequently committed to memory during the week, besides attending

to my studies in secular schools, and recited to my teacher correctly on Sunday, as many as *one hundred verses*; and these not of familiar passages of Scripture, but chapters and books consecutively. And this was a common thing with the boys, not at all unusual, and many no doubt exceeded this quantity. The result was inevitable, that so far as the exercises of the school were concerned, they consisted almost entirely of recitations, with no time for explanations or religious instruction. The idea of the teachers seemed to have been, to incorporate bodily into the heads of their pupils, the whole canon of the divine law, as an inexhaustible fountain from whence to draw during all after life. A grand thought, surely; but subject practically to very serious objections and difficulties, which the good sense of the teachers soon perceived, and a better course of instruction was gradually introduced. But this was not so easily or quickly done as might now be imagined. The whole subject was new, the teachers without chart or compass, the abounding facilities now possessed unknown. It is impossible for the present generation to understand the progress of religious instruction within the last fifty years, as applied to Sunday Schools. There were very few books written for children on Biblical subjects, and but few for the assistance of teachers;—not a single book of questions. I imagine that the condition of Sunday Schools then, was about the same as when originated; not much changed or improved. Good Mr. RAIKES never could have conceived the enlargement and elevation his system would in the progress of time attain. The teachers of our school applied themselves diligently and zealously to improvements. Mr. PARMELE prepared a series of questions on the "Historical Parts of the New Testament," which were printed and introduced into the school with the happiest effect, and the attention of teachers and scholars was directed especially to the careful study of the Scriptures. In the course of a few years, the school attained a high degree of prosperity and elevation, so as to attract attention abroad, and I doubt whether there was any where, at the time, a Sunday School

of greater merit in all the essentials of such an institution.

At the period when I became a scholar, the school was held in a room in the third story of a frame building on the easterly side of Genesee street, a few doors below Broad street, on or near the lot occupied by the store now used by the Merchant's Union Express Company. The room was called "Minerva Hall," and the old building was destroyed in the great fire of 1837. This room being inconvenient of access, and not large enough for the increasing number of scholars, the school was removed about the year 1821, or 1822, into a brick building on the southerly side of Catharine street, corner of Franklin street, being the premises whereon is now the building occupied by Lennebacker & DeLong. The building was two stories in height, the upper story being used as a Masonic Hall, and the first floor for a Lancasterian School. The old school house was taken down some years ago, and the present building erected on the lot. This room was large and convenient, and here the Sunday School remained for several years, with increasing prosperity, and until the year 1825, or thereabouts, when it was transferred to Hotel street, into a building owned by the Presbyterian Society. This building was situated on the westerly side of Hotel street, a few lots above Whitesboro street, on premises now occupied by A. L. Woodruff, and now known as No. 10 Hotel street. It was a frame building of one story and called the "Session Room." A second story was added thereto, for the accommodation of the Sunday School, and here the school continued until the brick Presbyterian Church on Washington street was completed, in the year 1827, when the school was removed to the rooms in the basement of the Church prepared for its use, from which it was ejected by the destruction of the edifice by fire, in the year 1851. On the completion of the new church and chapel on the corner of Washington and Columbia streets, in 1852, the school was removed to the rooms in the chapel, where it has ever since remained.

In speaking of the school prior to its removal, in 1827,

to Washington street, I mean the *boys'* school. I have no recollection whatever as to the location of the girls' school before that time.

For several years there was but one Sunday School in Utica. The notice in the village Directory of 1817 describes it as *the* Sunday School. All denominations and all classes were represented therein, the rich and the poor, white and black, bond and free. This was some years before the abolition of slavery in this State, and there were quite a number of slaves in the village. In 1820, a union of the then three principal denominations in the village was formed, consisting of Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, and thenceforth the school was called the "Utica Union Sunday School." This union continued until about the year 1827, when the population of the village having largely increased, all the children could not be included in one school, and consequently separate church schools were formed. The union was productive of very happy results. In those days, denominational differences and rivalries were much sharper than now, and by bringing together true Christians of various sects in so interesting and useful an employment, mutual love, confidence and esteem were promoted, the good results of which were impressed on the whole community, and remain at this day.

This led to the extension of the Union to the whole County, and in the autumn of 1824, the "Oneida Sunday School Union" was constituted, and the benefits of combined efforts of the friends of the cause proving to be great, led to the formation of the "Western Sunday School Union of the State of New York," in September, 1825.

The teachers were mostly young men, clerks, students and apprentices, pious, zealous and devoted, calling into the school by personal efforts nearly all the children of the village of a suitable age, frequently visiting them at their homes, and requiring punctual attendance on the classes, and perfect lessons. The discipline was strict but kind. Attendance on Sunday Church services was always required, and the scholars were marshaled to Church under the lead of

the teachers, with whom they sat in seats prepared for them in the galleries, each class by itself, with the teacher at the head. The scholars were closely examined as to the sermons, and they were encouraged to take notes thereof, and many of them acquired much facility in reporting.

Some of the teachers were very superior men. It always seemed to me that Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS was the ruling spirit of the school in its early days, of which he was long a teacher and Superintendent. He was older than most of the teachers, although then in the prime of life. His religious, social and business position was high;—of great energy, enterprise and liberality, he filled most acceptably at an early age, high positions in the Church, in municipal and military affairs, and as an enlightened, earnest and devoted Christian, was very conspicuous. I can never forget the impression he made upon me in the school, an influence which was felt by all the scholars. His personal appearance was very prepossessing; of noble presence, great dignity and suavity of manners, we respected and loved him. He was the very pattern of a Christian gentleman. And his influence continued to be felt long after he was obliged by his multifarious pursuits, and especially in consequence of engaging as one of the teachers of the Bible Class in the Church, to yield the personal management of the school to younger men. His interest in it never abated. Many of the teachers were his clerks and apprentices, whom he carefully trained, not only in secular pursuits, but most of all in religious matters. He was for many years at the head of the largest printing and publishing house in western New York, and had in his employ a large number of young men as clerks and apprentices, most of whom became truly decided Christian characters under his influence. It would be an interesting subject of inquiry to ascertain how many devoted religious young men went forth from his establishment, and became conspicuous in after life in walks of usefulness, as missionaries, ministers and Sunday School teachers. The number was surprisingly large.

In the early history of the school, TRUMAN PARMELE,

GEORGE S. WILSON and FREDERICK S. WINSTON, were among the most prominent and successful teachers, and it was my good fortune during most of my pupilage to be successively under their care. The two former have long since gone to their reward, and I can only express in broken and most imperfect language the deep sense of my great obligations for their unwearied care and kindness to my classmates and myself. Would that it were in my power to exhibit a portraiture of these beloved men, that would be recognized by those who knew them.

Mr. PARMELE became a resident of Utica in early life. I have been informed by those who knew him at this period, that he manifested no interest in religion, but was of a lively and ardent temperament, averse to the contemplation of the subject, and putting it far from him. But about the seventeenth year of his age, he was, by a violent attack of typhus fever, brought so low that his life was despaired of. On his recovery, it became evident that he had experienced a great change. He came up from the borders of the grave, "clothed and in his right mind." The things of religion now became his chief delight, and he at once engaged actively in all the duties thereof with his characteristic zeal, and thus continued unchanged during his whole life. It is not remembered that any conversations with his minister, or other pious people during his illness, led his mind then particularly to the subject. The good instructions he had received, applied by the Spirit of Truth to his conscience and heart in the solemn situation in which he was placed, wrought the good work, and to Him, as ever, must the praise and glory be given. He united with the Presbyterian Church in the village, then under the pastoral charge of the Rev. HENRY DWIGHT, and his active mind immediately sought for opportunities of putting his principles into practice, by doing good and communicating to others. And a wide and most important field of usefulness was presented in the Sunday School, then but recently introduced here. This was a most congenial pursuit, and he devoted himself to it with great ardor and perseverance. He became

a teacher, and as experience demonstrated to him the defects in the system of instruction which then existed, he applied himself assiduously to their correction. He was fortunate in finding others like himself, interested in the subject. A noble class of pious young men were then here, kindred spirits, heartily united in many a good work, conspicuous among whom was GEORGE S. WILSON, whose influence over his young friend PARMELE was great, and in the highest degree salutary. Together they devised plans to extend the benefits, and to increase the usefulness of the school. After being a teacher several years, Mr. PARMELE was made Superintendent, a position which he filled with great satisfaction to teachers and scholars, until his removal from the village.

My recollections of my old teacher and friend are quite distinct, and of the most agreeable character. I was placed under his charge at a very early age, and I can never forget the deep and tender concern he ever manifested in his scholars. His lessons were instructive and full of interest, and never failed to engage our attention. He was exceedingly patient, gentle and forbearing, ruling by the law of love. No harsh word ever fell from his lips, and so singular was his self-command, that during the years I was under his care, I never knew him to give way to the least anger or even petulance. He bore with our inattention, our follies, and our disobedience with wonderful patience. He thus acquired and ever held great influence over his own pupils and the whole school. The impressions made by his teaching and example were deep and permanent, and the amount of good accomplished by him was very great.

On removing from this place, Mr. PARMELE took up his residence in the city of New Orleans, where he remained for several years engaged in mercantile pursuits. There extraordinary opportunities presented for the exercise of his active religious spirit, and they were not left unimproved. He devoted himself with great zeal to all good and benevolent objects, especially the Church and Sunday School, and was one of the founders and most liberal contributors to the



Presbyterian Society in Lafayette Square, for some time under the charge of the Rev. JOEL PARKER.

Mr. PARMELE, at all times, gave liberally and freely of all he possessed, and shortly after his entrance on active life, together with his noble associates, entered into a solemn resolution devoting one-tenth of his income during the whole of life to charitable and religious uses, a pledge which was more than redeemed. But he was called from the scenes of his usefulness in the full vigor of manhood, dying before he had completed his 43d year.

Mr. WILSON was a remarkable man. A truthful portraiture of his character would, to those who never knew him, be considered an exaggeration, while to his scholars no eulogium, however highly wrought, would be satisfactory. I would not make the attempt, but that the history of the school would be quite imperfect, without a sketch of one to whom it was so largely indebted for many years of faithful service, and who contributed so largely to its prosperity. It is due to his sacred memory, that his honored name should not be passed over in silence; and as an example to young men, few lives can be more instructive or worthy of imitation.

By the death of his father, Mr. WILSON was thrown at an early age upon his own exertions for a livelihood. He applied to Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS for employment, and was received by him as an apprentice, and faithfully served him during the appointed term. He had few opportunities for education, and when he entered the printing office of Mr. WILLIAMS, his acquirements consisted of the simplest rudiments of learning. But his desire for knowledge was great, and his industry untiring, so that while he honestly served his employer, he devoted all the time that was his own, diligently to the instruction of himself, and with such success that in a few years he had attained a stock of valuable information, such as few of his age possessed. He had a vigorous intellect, his judgment was sound and discriminating. But the discouragements in his way were great. His constitution of body was frail, and under too

great exertions his health gave way, and he was obliged for a time to relinquish his pursuits. Recovering in a measure his strength, he returned with renewed determination to act manfully his part in life, but he was ever afterward an invalid, and all that he achieved was under weakness and infirmities that would have prostrated one of less energy and resolution of purpose. He was from an early age of a serious and devout spirit, and about his sixteenth year he made a public profession of religion, and immediately commenced that active course of benevolence which he pursued with untiring ardor and devotion during the remainder of his life. Entering the Sunday School, he soon became conspicuous for piety, intelligence and remarkable aptness in teaching. The young were drawn to him as by a sort of magnetic influence, and yet the secret of his power could easily be seen. He had a large and warm heart that burned to do good. He loved his God supremely, and his neighbor as himself. He was noble, generous, entirely unselfish, loving all that was good, hating every thing mean. With him religion was the grand, all-absorbing object in life, and time too short for doing all the good he desired. He was wholly and entirely in earnest, and none could doubt his sincerity. He loved his scholars truly, sympathized with them, sought their confidence, freely communicated to them all his thoughts, hopes and desires, made them his companions;—craved their love and confidence in return. Religion in him was presented in the most attractive form, simple, cheerful, noble, elevating. But he sought not only their spiritual good. While that was first and uppermost ever in his thoughts, he earnestly desired to make them intelligent, honorable, useful men, and was ever ready to help them onward in life. How gladly he assisted those who were poor and friendless!—they were especially the objects of his love and sympathy.

It is not to be wondered at that an entrance into Mr. WILSON'S Sunday School Class was a desire with many boys, and that more applied than could be received; and the sessions of the school, on Sundays, were insufficient to

impart all his instructions. He projected, therefore, a plan by which his own pupils and other boys might meet often together for religious and intellectual improvement. An association was formed, called the "Juvenile Society for Learning and Doing Good," the management of which was entrusted to the boys. The meetings were held weekly, and at these Mr. WILSON never failed to be present, the life and spirit of the whole. This society soon increased so as to embrace a large number of boys; indeed, even here there was not room enough to receive all that would gladly have attended. He thus had under his charge a large class for several years, at times as many as fifty or more, and happier pupils never sat under the instructions of a revered and loving teacher. It was impossible to resist the potent influence of such a character as his, and he moulded and formed the minds and hearts of his scholars, impressing them with his own noble and elevated views. These impressions may well be said to be ineffaceable; they exist even to the present time. Forty years have passed away, more than a quarter of a century his happy spirit has been in glory, some of his scholars have joined him there, many yet remain, gray haired men, and to these even now his influence is all powerful. Fresh and impressive as ever are his teachings and influence; he is still and always will be our teacher and loving friend.

On the completion of his apprenticeship, Mr. WILSON entered more fully and completely into his favorite pursuit of Sunday School instruction. He was active in the formation of the Oneida Sunday School Union, and afterwards of the Western Sunday School Union of the State of New York, associations which were of vast benefit, and gave a great impetus to the cause. Of the last named society he was made the Corresponding Secretary, and about the same time a Depository for the sale of Sunday School books was established in Utica, of which he was the manager; and in this way several years of his useful life were passed.

But much as he loved this employment, he had higher aspirations, and longed to preach the Gospel to all men.

Great difficulties were in the way, his age, straitened means, and limited education, were obstacles which few could have overcome. But his resolute spirit surmounted them all, and in due time he received his commission. After preaching awhile in Vermont, he was finally settled over the Presbyterian Church in Sacketts Harbor, the revered and beloved pastor of which he remained, until his strength was entirely gone, when he retired to die. But then his faith was put to a new and severer trial. With his ardent desire to be at work in his Master's service, he was doomed to linger long. Utterly helpless, he could only watch and wait. But with him, submissive patience had its perfect work, and in due time its exceeding great reward, when he was called up to receive his crown, in the 39th year of his age.

Of Mr. WINSTON, much good might with truth be said, but I am restrained from now saying what it would give me much pleasure to put on record, and what his scholars would delight to bear witness to, for it is our happiness to know that he is still living in active life and usefulness, and we can but pray that a long time may elapse before we are called to enter his name on the roll of our honored dead. It can with propriety be said that he was a very instructive and agreeable teacher, and a worthy successor of Mr. PARMELE and Mr. WILSON. His class will always bear him in most grateful and affectionate remembrance. He entered the school as a teacher when a very young man, only seventeen years of age, and continued therein until his removal to the city of New York, some four or five years later, where he has ever since resided, prominently connected with its commercial, benevolent and religious enterprises. His warm interest in Sunday Schools has continued to the present day. On removing to the city, he entered the service there with his accustomed zeal, and connecting himself with St. George's Church, for thirty years or more was a teacher and superintendent in its Sunday Schools, never allowing the engrossing cares of business, nor the increase of years to abate his ardor or interest therein. It may safely be said that the uncommon prosperity, extensive usefulness

and high celebrity of the schools of that parish are owing in no small degree to his intelligence, piety and zeal. Whether he still continues to be a Sunday School teacher I do not know, but there is no doubt that his interest in the good cause is unabated.

I shall ever esteem it one of the most fortunate and happy events of my life, that I had the privilege of attending the Sunday School, and I most cordially wish it continued and ever increasing prosperity.

Yours, respectfully,

JOHN H. EDMONDS.

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*From Mrs. Cornelia W. Martin.*

WILLOWBROOK, October 15, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, ESQ., *Chairman of Committee:*

MY DEAR SIR,—

It gives me great pleasure to collect and put into form my scattered thoughts respecting the Sabbath School at Utica, to which both you and I look, as to our spiritual Alma Mater. My recollections extend back to the time when the school was held in an upper room of a frame building on Hotel street, which I think was called the "Session room." There we met our Superintendents and Teachers at *eight* o'clock Sunday morning, and again after service in the afternoon. Effort and self-denial were required, on the part of parents and teachers, as well as scholars, to have every thing in readiness for the Sabbath School at so early an hour. Breakfast on Sunday morning must be a little earlier than usual, and mothers must be up in time to prepare their children, so as to ensure a punctual attendance. A devoted teacher, whom I knew and loved in early childhood, and who was one of the pioneers in the Sabbath School work at Utica, used to perform the onerous duties of her household,—prepare breakfast for her family, and leave home in time to be first on the ground at the school-room—where, often in cold winter mornings, she

kindled a fire and put the room in comfortable condition to receive the other teachers and scholars. She made a consecration of her *all* to her Saviour, and when her work on earth was done, Jesus came *himself* to receive her, and she died in the triumphs of *faith*.

Those were days when a great distinction was made between the *world* and the *church*. They who would follow Christ, *expected* to *deny themselves*, and "take up their cross daily." The Sabbath School work was one of labor and self-denial. The faithful teacher *aimed* at entire *consistency* in all her walk and conversation, and endeavored, not only in her words and actions, to adorn her Christian profession, but sought to *adorn herself* in "*modest apparel* as becometh a woman professing godliness." *Gay clothing* or a *display of jewelry*, at Sabbath School, would have been looked upon in those "primitive times" as almost *inadmissible*. Nothing in the *dress* of the teacher might direct the attention of her scholars from the great theme of her instructions. "What was proper and consistent in a Sabbath School teacher" was frequently a subject of earnest discussion, and the duty of carefully avoiding every thing which might have an evil or injurious influence upon the children of the Sabbath School was impressively enjoined.

Miss ELIZABETH HOYT was my teacher, a tender, affectionate, intelligent and conscientious Christian lady, who expressed the interest she felt in her scholars in a manner most acceptable to them. On leaving her class at one time for an absence of several weeks, she presented an interesting volume as her parting gift to each of her scholars. To my sister, she gave "The Hedge of Thorns," and I received from her kind hand, "The last day of the week." I read the book with great interest, again and again, and the incidents, cares, and changes of *forty* years have not obliterated from my memory the pleasing story, nor the impression made upon my heart of the kindness of my teacher. The Superintendent of our school at that time was Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, and her Assistant was Miss BETSEY BARKER. Mrs. CLARKE, as well as her Assistant, was a faithful and

devoted servant of Christ. She was called from her earthly labors in 1827, and at her death great lamentation was made over her. A memorial card was presented to every scholar in the Sabbath School, containing her dying message to the teachers, and upon it were inscribed several truths of Scripture for the children. I have carefully preserved this precious memento of one, whom, as a child, I revered, and enclose it, though there are doubtless many duplicates of it preserved in the families of the church at Utica.

"The dying message of Mrs. CLARKE to the Teachers of the Sunday School:—'Give my love to the Teachers; I hope they will *feel their responsibility and be faithful.*'"

I have already mentioned that we had two sessions of our school. In the afternoon, at the close of the exercises, the whole school was questioned by the Superintendent, who endeavored to make such an impression upon each mind of the great truths which we had committed to memory, as she thought it her duty to do in view of the great account which she must render at the last day. "The uncertainty of life," the "importance of early preparation for the great change from time to eternity," the "duty of consecrating all our talents to the service of the Redeemer," were *pressed* upon our attention, and when a deep and solemn impression had been made, care was taken not to divert the mind from eternal things. As our afternoon session was held after the services of the sanctuary, the shades of evening sometimes began to gather around us as we sung the closing hymn, for which a tune was selected in accordance with the solemnity of the great interests, to which conscience began to give heed.

"Jesus! and shall it ever be—  
A mortal man ashamed of thee?  
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,  
Whose glories shine through endless days?"

or, the beautiful hymn,

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,  
And did my Sovereign die?  
Would he devote his sacred head  
For such a worm as I?"

was read; and then the school standing, perhaps "Dun-dee's" low, marking measures rose; or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name. Then again, we would be animated by the more lively strains of

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all."

This hymn was sung in full chorus, our voices gathering strength and volume, as the words, "Crown him," were three times repeated, and falling to a low cadence, with the last line of each verse.

One distinguishing feature of the school, was the part-taken by strangers in its exercises. In those days of stage-coaches, travelers often remained over the Sabbath at Utica, and pursued their journey on Monday morning. Many eminent Christians, and clergymen of distinction, after attending the services of the sanctuary through the day, visited our Sabbath School. The Superintendent welcomed such friends with Christian courtesy and cordiality, and invited them to say something at the close of the usual exercises to the scholars and teachers. On introducing the speaker, she would say, "Children, you will now be addresssd by our friend —. I wish you would listen attentively to all that he says to you." Every eye was then directed to the stranger present—when words were often "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." The Rev. Dr. BAIRD, then a Sabbath School missionary, was often present with us. Mr. STEWART, also, (known by the cognomen of "Plaid-coat Stewart,") was a frequent visitor, and made the children remember him by some quaint remark, or peculiar expression, which was often well worth recollecting.

We were once addressed by a stranger, whose words still linger in my memory, and which time cannot obliterate. After a solemn appeal to us to seek the Lord in early youth, before "the evil days came," and the years drew nigh, in which we should say, "I have no pleasure in them," he finished his address with these words: Remem-



ber that *this life* is given to us *only to prepare for another.*" The faithful Christian went on his way, but the "seed he had sown by the way-side" was not lost; that thought was fixed in some minds never to be uprooted. It seemed a summary of all the *Catechisms*. It was that "wisdom which cometh from above," which teaches men so to live that they may never *die*.

I will not here speak of the labors and useful lives of many of the teachers in our Sabbath School, who, I remember with reverence and affection. Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, Mr. MILTON BRAYTON, who superintended the Male Department of the school, Mrs. OSTROM, whose "praise is in the churches," and others, who still pursue their laborious work with untiring assiduity.

The Master has come and called for many of his faithful servants, who have left to us their bright example, and the blessings which have descended in answer to their prayers. Let us follow them as they followed Christ, that in the great day, "he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together."

Yours, truly,

CORNELIA W. MARTIN.

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*From George L. Tracy.*

ST. LOUIS, *October 12, 1866.*

DEAR SIR,—

The invitation to attend the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sunday School in which I may say I was brought up, is this day received, and I much regret that business engagements will prevent my being with you, and that, too, after an absence from my old home of over ten years. I presume my father has already written you, giving all the information to be derived from the Tracy family, but I will say for myself, that I always have, and do ever look back to the hours spent in the old First Church Sunday School, as among the happiest of my life, and filled with pleasant recollections. I am, yours truly,

GEORGE L. TRACY.

*Letter from Rev. W. Frederic Williams.*

MOSUL, *Assyria*, February 4, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

No! No! You ask too much of me, ready as I always am to gratify you, this is beyond my power. You ought to have what is both interesting and instructive at your Sabbath School Jubilee, and for that you must look to those who hold the "pen of a ready writer."

But the day's labor ended, as I sat one evening alone, in the little quiet room of a native brother, musing, American like, with my feet upon the stove, your request came into mind and brought up the past—not continuously—but in patches, as I have seen the mountains when thick clouds are upon them—here and there a little spot where every rock, bush and tree stand sharply out in the clear sunlight—all the rest impenetrably covered and hidden. Will eternity be the lifting of all these clouds? Will *the whole*, be then and ever, as sharp and clear as spots are now?

So your school is just as old as the American Bible Society; at least two years older than I, so there must be some whose reminiscences go back further than mine, there must have been scholars in it before I was. Still, I well remember the old brick Lancasterian school house on Catharine street, where we sung "Dismission" and "Tallis Evening Hymn," because it was too dark to read any hymn. That was in the days of many-versed lessons, when the strife was who should commit the greatest number of verses. I would not dare to hint *how many*, lest I should be called the "father of a large memory," but "there were giants in those days," even among the children, and after that, when the lessons were cut down to fifteen verses, we *little* boys thought them contemptibly short, and were hugely indignant not to be allowed to emulate what the older boys had put on record. But so it was ordained, and so we had to accept it, and be content with only fifteen.

One little incident, connected with, though not *in* the

Sabbath School, I remember like a picture. I was yet too small, I suppose, to go to meeting, or at most to keep still after I got there, and so another child, an older brother I presume, for there were such things even in that remote times, took me in hand and led me home. By the way: Queer arrangement that! Home on Broad street, below First: Sabbath School on Catharine, opposite Franklin, and Church on Washington, corner of Liberty! They do things differently now. I was toddling towards home, when a shower overtook us, and my escort led me up the frightful slopes of a plank, into an unfinished brick dwelling—building about where then Judge BACON's house stood. As I reason about it, now, I conclude that probably we stayed there only till the shower was over, though if only what we remember happened, I must be there yet, for I have no recollection of the coming down.

The old Lancasterian school room grew too strait for us, and so a swarm of the little folks was hived into a carpenter's shop on Franklin street, where only two scenes remain daguerreotyped. Whether this transfer was before or after the lessons were reduced, I can not say, but in a very short time, both schools were removed to a two story building on Hotel street; boys up stairs, and girls below.

But the great event for the school was when the tall steepled church was finished, and the boys and girls respectively took possession of the north and south Sabbath School rooms, with square pews for the classes, a desk in the midst, before which was a stool for the teacher. That was a great day! Then we believed the *ne plus ultra* of Sunday School improvements had been reached, and how multitudinous and luminous shone the library through those glass windows! What a time, drawing library books, was there!

The years have rolled on, and many who were then active and prominent, are now in the spirit land. FAY EDGERTON, TRUMAN PARMELE, GEORGE S. WILSON, Mrs. CLARKE, Mrs. OSTROM, not to mention others. They have ceased from their labors, and their works do follow them, and soon

the great school in the upper sanctuary will be all gathered in, and the lessons of life studied in a new light.

As I remember, it was while TRUMAN PARMELE was Superintendent, that New Orleans merchants used (some of them,) to take the interior route—no railroads then—and time their journey so as to spend the Sabbath in Utica, purposely to visit our school and learn how. Who can count up all the influences of this one school for the first fifty years of its existence? The widening undulations of that wave encompass the globe.

I remember a little timid, bashful boy, who one Sunday stole quietly up to the Superintendent, and asked for the missionary box, that he might put into it *his first cent*. It was his all, and he offered it alone, for there was no contributions being taken up.

But my sheet is full, and *even you* will be wearied out with my memories; so good night. God bless you and your school, and all connected with it, and fill the earth with even better ones. Amen. Amen.

Your affectionate brother,

W. FREDERIC WILLIAMS.

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*From John P. Conkey.*

PHILADELPHIA, PA., Oct. 11, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, Esq., *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR:

It gives me pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your circular, inviting me to participate in the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of your Sabbath School. It would afford me greater pleasure if I could accept the invitation. My ordinary duties, although ever pressing, might, and probably would have been made to yield to my inclination; but a special engagement for the 21st, which may not be postponed nor omitted, compels me to a reluctant declination.

My reminiscences of the school are solicited. Most gladly would I contribute anything within my power to promote

the interest of the occasion, were it at all likely that such aid would be needed. But my connection with the school was of such comparatively minor importance as to render any reference to it valueless for the purpose suggested. Lest, however, this may seem a disparaging estimate of the influence of the school, I should say, that *to me*, its influence was not only impressive while being directly exerted, but has proven to be also lasting. It was there my first essay at teaching was made, now more than thirty years ago. From the temporary absence of its teacher, a class of small children was unsupplied for the day. The superintendent, (whose name I cannot recall, unless it was Mr. GEORGE TRACY,) took me from my class, directing me to teach the little ones! I was not twelve years old, myself! Now the two prominent feelings produced in me by that trifling circumstance were, first the *authority of the Superintendent*, and then my own *personal responsibility*. Although very reluctant, and wondering why he selected me, (which was doubtless to him a mere chance selection,) yet such was my sense of his *rightful authority*, that I did not venture to object. But no one can describe my feelings as I took the *teacher's seat*. A new world of thought was opened to me. I shall never forget the trembling of that moment, nor the sense of oppression, on account of my responsibility. In whatever work I have since been engaged for the Master, these sentiments, then so deeply impressed, have been with me permanent considerations.

Then fourteen years after, when again a teacher in the school, I was directed by the pastor, the Rev. Mr. SPENCER, to take the Superintendence of a Mission Sabbath School, in West Utica. And with the same feelings and from the same considerations already described, I entered this new field of labor. It was for me an advanced position, indeed, assumed with many misgivings; but its influence on my subsequent work in the vineyard, was neither slight nor transient. As one result, I will state, that the Mission School became the *model* of one organized by me, beyond the Mississippi, which was the instrumentality used by the

Master, for the conversion and partial preparation of more than one ministerial laborer among the Germans.

But enough: these hasty lines are not for public use; but only to assure you and your fellow laborers that I do not lightly esteem the Sabbath School, whose mention recalls only pleasant memories.

Very truly yours, in a common service,

1829 Camac St.

JOHN P. CONKEY.

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*From Rev. Edward D. Morris, D. D.*

COLUMBUS, OHIO, *October 17, 1866.*

REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D. :

MY DEAR BROTHER :

I have been delaying from day to day, my response to the kind invitation to be present, and participate in the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sabbath School connected with the First Presbyterian Church ;—delaying in the hope that my duties and engagements at home would take such shape as would permit me to share with you in an enjoyment and the blessing of that occasion. Unfortunately for myself, I am just now so far engrossed by the occupations and cares incident to my ministry here, as to be unable to avail myself of that privilege; and can, therefore, do no better than to say, by letter, what I would greatly prefer to say in person. I give you permission, dear brother, to presume that, apart from my own pleasure and profit, but little will be lost by the substitution.

I can hardly realize that my recollections respecting the First Church Sabbath School, lie almost exclusively within the *first half* of the period you are commemorating. During most of the year 1841, I resided as a clerk in the village of Remsen, and when, at the close of that year, I returned to Utica, I neglected, greatly to my own detriment, to resume my connection with the school. Though remaining in the city and vicinity until 1846, I was never drawn back into those preservative and hallowing associations, and since

that time, have been only an occasional visitor, where once my young feet loved to hasten, as often as the Sabbath came. Although my direct connection with the school thus terminated in my sixteenth year, I can now at the end of a quarter century, recall most distinctly many of the persons associated in it, and many of the prominent events in its history during the ten or twelve preceding years. Those two rooms, for boys and girls respectively, with their square and rather comfortless seats, and the stand and stool provided for each teacher; how vividly I remember them, and the multitude of those both older and younger, who assembled therein with each recurring Sabbath! For some months prior to his departure to China, in 1833, I was a scholar in the class of the missionary, S. WELLS WILLIAMS, and even to this day I retain, how freshly, the impression made upon me by his then youthful face and pleasant voice. I recollect clearly the person and manner of Dr. GRANT, who left his place in the school in the spring of 1835, in order to aid in establishing the mission to the Nestorians. Other persons, such as Mr. GEORGE TRACY, and Mrs. OSTROM, and their associates, and especially Mr. BULLOCK, JOHN F. SEYMOUR, Esq., and the Hon. WM. J. BACON, my own beloved teachers during the five years prior to 1841, will have a distinct and honored place in my esteem, so long as memory lasts. May God reward each of these, even on the earth, for his labor of love on my behalf.

It is difficult, and perhaps impossible, for those who were scholars at that distant period, now to recall the specific impressions there made upon them, or to sum up the benefits of a spiritual class which they have derived from the school. The lessons learned, the truths explained and enforced, the counsel and admonition given, have long since been appropriated by the soul, and have become constituent elements in its intellectual and moral life; indistinguishable, perhaps, from kindred contributions obtained from other sources, yet none the less potent or precious, because no longer capable of distinct analysis or enumeration. The general testimony of every such scholar must show

that an extraordinary degree of mental and religious activity then prevailed within the school, and that deep and ineradicable impressions were there made upon the large majority of those in attendance. For myself, I rejoice to say that next to the influences of my Christian home, I sincerely place that school as first among the instrumentalities which finally led me to Christ, and to His service in the ministry. If I have had any measure of success in that ministry, or have accomplished any thing of good for the cause of the Master, I rejoice to come and lay that result in large part as a grateful offering upon your altar, in this glad feast of commemoration.

Were I to make an address on the occasion to which you are looking forward so happily, I would endeavor to elucidate and enforce this practical thought:—that the vast and now incalculable aggregate of good done through such a school, in such a period of time, is traceable in the last resort to the faith, the prayer, the effort of *individual souls*. What has the organization been, but an association of *individuals*, for the purpose of imparting and receiving spiritual blessing! What has the school been, but a place where *individual* minds might meet, and *individual* hearts might come into contact around the most vital and momentous of all interests! What have been the various appointments, arrangements, exercises, but so many methods of *individual* working—so many ways in which the soul of the teacher was enabled to reach, instruct, quicken, and save the soul of the scholar! The organization, grand and historic though it has now become, thus rests for its human base on the faith, the prayer, the effort of individual men and individual women: these have done through it all that it has ever accomplished, and has made it all that it now is.

To those who have labored in the school during the half century now past, and have endeavored to do their whole duty therein, as unto the Lord, this simple fact may properly bring much of comfort and encouragement. To those now laboring there, it may serve as an admonition on one side, and as a fountain of strength and of cheer on the



other. Would to God that I might stand before both classes, and occupy a few moments of the precious occasion in further illustrating and enforcing the momentous lesson.

I shall celebrate the Saturday and Sabbath, if not in personal presence, still in this distant place, by happy remembrances, and by earnest prayers on your behalf. Already I pray that God will be with you, and will make this Anniversary a source of spiritual good to you, and to the entire flock over which He hath made you overseer.

Yours, in Christ,

EDWARD D. MORRIS.

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*From George Tracy, Esq.*

MILWAUKEE, October 15, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee :*

DEAR SIR :

I am in receipt of your letter inviting my family and myself to be present at the "Jubilee" celebration of your Sabbath School on the 21st and 22d inst., and we are much gratified in your kind remembrance of us.

I sincerely regret that my business engagements are such as to prevent my being with you, at this pleasant reunion of many surviving members of the school. You request me, if unable to be with you, to send a letter, I suppose to contain incidents, &c., that may occur to me in connection with the history of the school, and only wish I had the ability to make them more attractive.

My recollections of the school commenced in 1826, and though not a scholar myself, my sisters were, and through them and others, I was quite familiar with its operations. The school was then held in the old Session Rooms, (still standing, I believe,) on Hotel street, and was then composed of two departments, comparatively independent organizations. One for the boys, in charge of that model Superintendent, Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, whose superior in talent and qualifications for that position, I never knew. His winning, attractive ways, secured the warmest attachment

of, and confidence of both teachers and scholars, and withal he was a most devoted and earnest Christian. I also well remember his able and efficient corps of Assistants, among whom I shall never forget, Mr. (afterwards Rev.) GEO. S. WILSON, who possessed, in an eminent degree, a genial, delightful Christian character, and his Juvenile Society, composed mostly of boys of the Sabbath School, all of whom were warmly and devotedly attached to him, and scattered as they now are, fondly cherish his memory.

The Female Department was under the superintendence of Mrs. SARAH K. CLARK, of blessed memory, a most devoted Christian lady, who died while in the discharge of its duties, and deeply mourned by all her associates, and scholars. I well remember a little memorial of her, got up at the time by them, a copy of which, neatly framed, always hung, afterwards, over the Superintendent's desk, until destroyed by the burning of the church.

The schools took possession of their rooms, in the west half of the basement of the (then) new church in 1827. The boys' school in the north room, and the school for the girls in the south, the separate organization being continued until, I think, about 1837, when the two departments united, occupying the north room, which was the larger one.

The fall and winter of 1830-31, witnessed quite an extensive work of grace in Utica, and with many associates, I identified myself with the Sabbath School work, the next spring, uniting with the Sabbath School of the then Bleecker street Presbyterian Church, Rev. Dr. LANSING, and thenceforward was almost uninterruptedly connected with some one of the Church or Mission Schools, until I left Utica for my present western home in 1856.

Becoming a member of the First Presbyterian Church in 1836, I had for a year or two, a class in the Sabbath School, (J. F. SEYMOUR, Superintendent,) but uniting in an effort to establish a Congregational Church in 1839, (I think,) joined the Sabbath School of that Church, but the enterprise being abandoned, I returned to the First Presbyterian Church in 1844 or '45, again entering the Sabbath

School, was in a short time made Superintendent, which position I held until the fall of 1852.

It was during my superintendency that what seemed to us, then, a great calamity, occurred in the burning of our beautiful and much loved church, and it was indeed a dark Monday to us, as we gazed on its smouldering ruins; though what was apparently such an irreparable loss, was overruled, I think, by a kind Providence, for good to both church and Sabbath School.

The destruction of our pleasant and conveniently arranged rooms, (for a basement,) greatly embarrassed our operations for nearly two years, as we followed the church to the different Halls occupied for worship, one of which was quite distant from our former field of labor.

We had several visits during these years from old scholars, who having become residents of other and distant States, would introduce themselves as formerly one of us, pointing out their old seats, naming their teachers, and referring to their former connection with the school as a most pleasant and profitable remembrance.

I found them also followers of the blessed Master, and engaged in the Sabbath School work in their present homes. These visits were highly gratifying and encouraging to us.

Death took from us during this period, a number of our flock, but in every instance, so far as we knew, or could learn, we had the most encouraging assurance of their preparations for a blessed immortality. The scenes at the dying beds of some of them were consoling and delightful and nearly as heavenly as those of the last hours of NATHAN DICKERMAN.

We also had an active, efficient corps of teachers, to whom, for their earnest co-operation, I shall always have feelings of the deepest gratitude, and they will all join me in according to one departed brother and sister, Mr. MAYNARD and Mrs. OSTROM, the honor of far overstepping us all in earnestness, devotedness, and consequent success.

I will leave to others, who will do it more fully and hap-

pily, to pronounce their eulogy. Let us cherish their memory, and strive to be like faithful workers.

Among my most precious relics, I shall always prize the beautiful memento, and specially the autograph letter of presentation, accompanying it, that I received from my fellow teachers, on leaving the Sabbath School. It is a constant reminder of pleasant associates.

But I am fearful I have already wearied you, and will only say in conclusion, that the Sabbath School interest I had awakened in me at Utica, I have endeavored to bring to the city and State of my adoption. Connecting myself with a Sabbath School here, the first Sunday after my arrival, I have to the present time been a laborer in the Sabbath School field, and expect to die in the service.

With kind regards to my fellow laborers in our glorious cause, and praying that the next fifty years' history of your dear Sabbath School may prove successful, even greatly beyond those now past.

I am, truly yours,

GEORGE TRACY.

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*From James E. Crane.*

NEW YORK, *October 16, 1866.*

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

MY DEAR SIR:

Your printed Circular of invitation to the Fiftieth Anniversary of your school, was duly received from my former Sunday School scholar, LAWRENCE HURLBURT, Esq., last week, and would have received my immediate acknowledgement, had I not been prostrated upon a sick bed, suffering from a severe disease, (spinal meningitis.)

I have only deferred from day to day, in hope of some interval in which I should be free from pain, and even now, having waited till the last moment, I am obliged to dictate to an amanuensis, while suffering acutely.

You will, of course, infer, that the extreme pleasure which I would otherwise enjoy, in being with you on such

an interesting and joyous occasion, is denied me, as some weeks must elapse before I can hope to leave my bed.

Nevertheless, my heart warms with the thought of all the felicity and good that seems sure to accrue from the reunion of so many spirits, interwoven with each other by the happiest memories, and the consciousness of so many harvests garnered;—so many fountains opened, whose deep springs, we trust, help to swell the volume of the river of the water of life.

My connection with the school dates back a little over thirty-one years, when, with childish steps I mounted to the back seat of the infant class, in the summer of 1835. I remember, distinctly, when going to and from the school, crossing the Broadway foot bridge, and having the canal boats pointed out to me, still looked upon with suspicion as the instrument which brought the cholera to Utica, in 1832.

But the memories of the Sunday School itself are so vague, as to leave no definite impression. My next connection with the school was in November, 1849, as a member of GEORGE D. FOSTER'S Bible Class,—the Sunday School under the superintendence of GEORGE TRACY, Esq., and the memory of whose ever-cheerful, joyous, and paternal smile brings back only the pleasantest reminiscences. Mr. TAYLOR had not yet made Utica his home, but the other kindred spirits, Mrs. OSTROM, THOMAS MAYNARD, and Mrs. BUSSEY, were the burning and shining lights, the lustre of whose devotion burns brighter and brighter with the lapse of time. It was my especial privilege to be intimate with each of them, and after the lapse of nearly twenty years, rich in varied experiences, both in our own, and foreign lands, there is to-day no delight more pure, no memory so precious, as the communion with these laborers in the vineyard, whose hope never faltered, and whose zeal never flagged.

My first official relation with the school, placed me as teacher of a class of young men, in the spring of 1850. Among them were the names of CHARLES BUTLER, JAMES

MURDOCK, and WM. SWARTWOUT, and all of whom, I believe, without exception, have won for themselves honorable names, and one, at least, is distinguishing himself in this city, as an active, and useful member of Christ's church. About this time was organized the Mission School in West Utica, under the fostering care of THOMAS MAYNARD, in connection with the Lutheran church, in charge of Mr. WETZEL. My first connection with this school was as teacher of the Young Men's Bible Class, held in the choir of the church. Many will remember Mr. SUNDAY, who was brought out in connection with this school, and none who knew him, can forget the singleness of purpose, or the ardor with which he engaged in making known to others the peace and joy which illumined his own soul. He spoke English with tolerable fluency, yet when called upon to lead in prayer, his spirit could not brook the restraint of a foreign tongue, but broke forth in pleadings for more grace, for a pureness of heart, for more zeal, and in intercession for lost sinners, with freer thought, in the language of his fatherland. And although a large proportion of those present understood not a word which he uttered, yet the solemnity occasioned by his prayers was seldom if ever exceeded within the walls of our Mission School.

My class of young lads in the First Church School became more and more endeared to me, during the subsequent three years in which I made Utica my home. I was absent from the city for a few months of that time, and when I returned, I found the old church burned, and the chapel of the present edifice already occupied by the Sunday School, though the congregation continued to meet in the City Hall. My class in the Mission School was broken up, and my position in the main school was most happily filled by Mr. TAYLOR. I found, however, a most delightful work in taking charge of the infant class in the main hall of the chapel, assisted by Miss DORCHESTER, where I remained some months. The memory of the hymn,

"I think when I read that sweet story of 'old,'"

which we so often sung, and which is inseparably associ-

ated with Mrs. OSTROM, who gave us the words and music, still haunts me, and calls up those delightful days to vivid remembrance.

The duties of my post, together with those in the Mission School, proving too arduous, I resigned my position in the infant school, for a class of boys in the main school above, their ages varying from seven to ten years, gave me a field, at once the most impressible, and most delightful in which to work, and pleasant as had been my previous charges, this was the class which gave me the most supreme delight.

I have thus briefly narrated my official connection with the school, which closed in November, 1853, ill health requiring me to take up a residence in a far southern State. The total number of pupils under my care, from first to last, including the mission, and infant class, numbered about 120. Living for many years in distant cities, my reminiscences in the lives of my scholars were of necessity very few, but were all of a delightful character. The fall of 1853 was a season of more than usual interest, and two of my class, from West Utica, were often to be found in the evening meeting. Once, at the close of the services, one of them came to me, and wished me to go with him to Dr. FOWLER'S study. We found Dr. F. wearied out with his incessant labor, still a few kind words were said, and found lodgement, and he was dismissed with the request to come again. Some years afterward, I was gratified by receiving a letter from him, expressing ardent attachment to the Master's cause, and stating that he was there prosecuting his studies, with a view of entering the ministry.

But time and strength fail me in recalling other interesting reminiscences, or to name the many co-laborers in either school, but whose names and histories have been greatly refreshed in my memory by this call from your committee.

You have, as ever, my warmest and most sincere wishes for your present and future prosperity, and in the hope that the generations yet to come, will both receive and give

the pure light of truth, as in the days gone by, permit me to subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend,

JAMES E. CRANE.

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*From William House.*

LONDONDERRY, N. H., October 12, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR :

I regard as one of the great lessons of my life, my inability to be present and enjoy the festivities of your Sabbath School Jubilee. For years the First Church Sabbath School has been very dear to my heart. During the revival in Utica in the spring of 1848, under the pastorate of the late and warmly beloved WILLIAM H. SPENCER, I believe that God brought me into his kingdom of life. At once I went in as Librarian to the West Utica German Sabbath School, under the care of Mr. (now Rev.) JOHN P. CONKEY. Quite early in the spring of 1849 I entered the First Church School, succeeding Mr. LATIMORE as teacher of a class of six boys. Whether they reaped any advantages from early attempts at instruction is more than I can tell. Under the superintendency of Mr. GEORGE TRACY, the school then numbered some 300 scholars and 45 teachers. In September following, Mr. TRACY was re-elected Superintendent, the lamented THOMAS MAYNARD, Assistant, and ROMAINE CLARK, Librarian. At this time, upon the resignation of Mr. GEORGE WALKER, I was chosen Secretary of the school. At this post I remained until March, 1850, when I left the school and dear old Utica to prepare for my life-work. You observe, dear brother, that these duties are too recent for me to indulge in reminiscences. In those days we met in the old church below the canal. That charming old church, whose audience room was the most pleasant I ever saw, and whose sweet-toned bell still rings in my ear, like the very voice of mercy set to solemn mu-



sis: and, as I revisit Utica now and then, no spot seems dearer than the few rods of ground upon which it stood.

I recall the double Sabbath School rooms in the rear of the basement, reached by passing through the old "Session Room," where I attended the first inquiry meeting of my life, and asked the prayers of God's people. Upon either door of the Sabbath School room hung a large card, on one side of which, in large large letters, was the conspicuous sentence, "*I am early.*" This greeted and cheered all the punctual. On the other side of the card was written, "*I am late;*" and as soon as the exercises began, this side of the card was displayed, admonishing all the tardy with its silent, yet powerful reproof. The school was prosperous and useful then as it has always been. None of you who gather at its anniversary will be in danger of over-estimating its worth to souls—its value to the First Church for fifty years. Neither distance nor time diminish my affection for it or interest in it. That affection is rather like some *elastic* bond, with the stamp of "Goodyear & Co." on it—the more time and space *stretch* it, the *harder* does it draw, and the stronger does it seem.

During my year in the school, many strangers addressed it; one, from Rhode Island, said that five *P's* were essential to a good teacher—Piety, Punctuality, Perseverance, Patience, and Prayer. In 1849, and 1850, the school was characterized by harmony, interest, and success. Indeed, it was a guaranty to the success of any school to have *one* such teacher as the devoted Mrs. JOHN H. OSTROM. Her's must be a bright crown in glory. The school, as then, is ineffaceably photographed on my mind. I seem still to hear the joyous step of those children and teachers through the Session Room; I see them in Sunday attire, with smiling faces and happy hearts, taking their places to study the Book of books; I join in the reading, the prayer and the singing, and I listen to the hum so peculiar only to a large Sabbath School, as if I were still there.

Hoping that the occasion may be one of great pleasurable profit, that it may encourage your hearts, and that

many cycles of fifty years of ever increasing usefulness may crown the First Church Sabbath School, is the prayer of

Yours truly,

WILLIAM HOUSE.

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*From A. M. S. Palmer.*

ELMIRA, October 19, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee:*

DEAR SIR:

Your invitation to attend the Sabbath School Anniversary, at Utica, was received yesterday. Please accept of my grateful acknowledgment for the favor conferred. I should be very happy to attend the meeting, but it is not convenient for me to do so.

It would be very gratifying to meet again those with whom I once associated in the Sabbath School. Many, *many* years have passed away since I met with bright and happy faces in the basement of the First Church. Those gatherings were very pleasant to me, and I well remember the interest manifested in the cause of Sabbath Schools. Mr. MATHER was the teacher of the class of which I was a member. He was a faithful and a devoted Christian. I do not know whether he is living, but his memory is still enshrined in my heart. I was not personally acquainted with the young ladies of my class, but their pleasant faces are still *remembered*. I believe Col. WILLIAMS was the Superintendent.

Very pleasant reminiscences are brought to mind when I recall the time that I was a member of the Church and Sabbath School: Of Mr. AIKEN, who was then the pastor, (very precious is the memory of that good man;) and I can hear again the sweet notes of the organ, whose trembling keys were touched by the hands of a beloved friend\* who now makes sweeter music on a golden harp above. Hope points me to that upper sanctuary (which will never

\* The late GEORGE DUTTON.

be destroyed by fire) where so many of the loved are now worshipping God in the "beauty of his holiness." I feel that the anticipated anniversary will be very interesting. And may the Lord be with you all, and bless the happy reunion of long-cherished friends. May divine Wisdom guide and direct, and bless every effort made to advance the cause of Sabbath Schools. I am unable to forward any thing in particular that would be interesting or instructive in your report. Be assured of my interest in the coming anniversary, and believe me,

Yours, very respectfully,

A. M. S. PALMER.

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*From James Murdock.*

PITTSBURGH, Pa., October 16, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee :*

DEAR SIR :

Your kind invitation to attend the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Church Sabbath School has just come to hand. I have been hoping for some time that I should be able to attend the reunion on the 20th and 21st, but business will not allow of my leaving here at that time; and I write that you may know that I am with you in *thought*, if not in *body*. Ever since I sat on the *high seats* of the "Infant Department" in our old church, I have been a member of the First Church Sunday School; and many pleasant, as well as sad memories crowd through my mind, as I think of the more than twenty years that I have attended as scholar in the old and new Sunday School rooms. I say *new*, as it seems but a short time since we entered the present beautiful school room; and yet it is many a long year. I have not time, nor would you care to have me, recall the names of all my old teachers; but I must mention two who have gone home to their reward—MR. THOMAS MAYNARD and MR. A. T. BATTELL. God called them, and they have joined the great class above, where there is *ever* a Sunday School—the place *they* loved so well.

I hope and trust that with all the rest of my kind teachers and classmates we may join them, and listen with pleasure to the Great Teacher.

Thanking the school for their kindness to myself when I was so fortunate as to be connected with the school as Librarian, and praying that many may find, as I trust *I* did, the "true way" while a scholar in the school,

I remain yours, in behalf of the Sunday School cause,

JAMES MURDOCK.

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*From Louie Hopkins.*

WILLIAMSTOWN, October 18, 1866.

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman of Committee :*

MY DEAR SIR :

It has given me real pleasure to be remembered among those who have been bidden to your coming anniversary. I wish that I could be present and could thank you personally for a kindness which my brief connection with the school gave me no right to expect.

I felt that the service which I was able to perform, was only that of keeping together a class which might otherwise have been obliged to disband. But the study to which it led me was delightful, and St. Paul and his travels have been more real to me ever since. Sabbath School teachers must learn much, whether they accomplish much for others or not.

I count the hours which I spent in the Bible class, as among those pleasant recollections which still make Utica like home to me. May I ask you to remember me affectionately to any of the class who chance to recall me as they look over the past.

I shall think of you on Saturday and Sunday, in the faith that they will be not only pleasant in rejoicing over the building so far completed, but in gaining a staging at a greater height, nearer the "top stone." Please believe me,

With sincere regrets, very truly yours,

LOUIE HOPKINS.

*From J. Wyman Jones.*

NEW YORK, *October 18, 1866.*

R. S. WILLIAMS, *Chairman Committee:*

DEAR SIR:

I am in receipt of your invitation to attend the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church in Utica, for which I thank you in behalf of myself and wife. Mrs. JONES remembers her association with that school with deep interest; and as the Superintendent of the Sunday School in our own Church at Englewood, such an occasion excites my warmest sympathy.

I wish it were in our power to be present with you, but it is impossible.

God be with you, cheering all who are still engaged in that time-honored school, by the hallowed memories of the past, and encouraging your hearts with heavenly hopes.

Faithfully yours,

No. 6 Broad St.

J. WYMAN JONES.

*From Adam Martin.*

WATERTOWN, Wis., *October 22, 1866.*

DEAR SIR:

The circular for the Fiftieth Anniversary of your Sabbath School reached me Saturday, October 20th, and of course, too late for me to make any communication that might have been of interest at your meetings. Although I am convinced that anything from me would have been superfluous, I should have done myself the favor to express to you my many fond and lasting remembrances of my relations in the Sabbath School. Such teachers as I had, Mr. THOMAS MAYNARD and Mr. WILLIAM S. TAYLOR, are a great blessing to any boy and to any school, and I am sure the whole class will remember them in eternity. And you will allow me to take this occasion to assure you of my continued interest in the school, and of my grateful remembrances of the good I have there received.

Yours very truly in Christ, ADAM MARTIN.

The reading of letters having been finished, Mr. WILLIAM TRACY, of New York, at the Chairman's request, came forward and spoke as follows :

## ADDRESS OF WILLIAM TRACY.

I was never connected with the Sunday School proper of this church, either as pupil or teacher, and therefore, strictly have no right to occupy your time at this pleasant re-union. I was, however, a teacher in the Bible Classes, which have been alluded to as the harvest field of the seed sown in the Sunday School. I can testify that the seed was faithfully sown there. At the end of my connection with the Bible Classes, hundreds of pupils had gone forth from them, and many of the number had been called away from earthly scenes. A record of their names had been kept, and we had the pleasing evidence that each one of them had died with a reasonable religious hope, and in peace with God. I am unacquainted with the subsequent history of all the members of the classes, but I know that a multitude of them are now honoring a profession of Christianity in various communions of the church militant.

I became a teacher in 1831, and was connected with the classes some twelve years. Most of my associates in instruction have passed away. I see but one of them here, your honored Chairman, and I learn that my venerable friend, SPENCER KELLOGG, is the only other survivor residing in this city. But on your roll of the honored dead, I recognize the names of most of them. That roll calls me back to the days of my early manhood, and at the same time tells me that I am surrounded with the graves of very dear companions. All the names written there are familiar to me, and memory recalls to me the forms of those who bore them, with the truth of a photograph. There were among them, not a few who were ornaments, not simply to this church, but to our race, and to Christianity.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS has been alluded to as one prominent in the political and military affairs of this town. That,

however, was but an insignificant part of his history. It was in this church as one of its earliest and most honored, office-bearers, and in this community as one of the most benevolent, self-sacrificing, and active promoters of every enterprise, to increase the happiness, and alleviate the sufferings of humanity, that all who knew him best remember him. They who survive, of the inhabitants of Utica, during the first visitation of the cholera, in 1832, will never forget his services to the sick and dying, as well as to those who, from poverty, were unable to fly from the pestilence, and whose daily earnings were cut off by the suspension of business. It was not only from morn to night, but from early morn to early morn, was he seen driving from house to house, prescribing for, comforting and encouraging the sick, and smoothing the pillow of the dying, and distributing to the needy, until he was himself stricken down with the disease, slowly to recover. His face, always beaming with benevolence, cheered every sick room, and to many a sufferer, operated as a restorative to life when hope was almost gone. The last years of his life were beclouded by a painful visitation of Providence, but those who knew him in health, love to dwell upon his character, full of all that was lovely and benevolent, as a lover of his race and of his God.

Another of those names awakens in the bosoms of those whose memories can reach back a quarter of a century, most delightful recollections: WALTER KING, for many years the senior teacher of the Bible Classes. After a successful career as a lawyer, he removed to a farm some three miles from this city, where he spent the evening of his days. He was a man of varied learning, with all his talents and acquirements sanctified to the mission of leading souls to Christ, and building them up in the faith. With most genial feelings, and a purely catholic spirit, he united a singular humility. I have known no one so well fitted for the duties of a Bible Class teacher, or more successful in his efforts. After a life of usefulness, it might have been said of him, he "walked with God and he was not; for God took him."

His death was a translation. While traveling in the western part of this State, in apparent health, his head fell upon his breast, and his spirit instantaneously passed to the presence of his Maker. We could not mourn for him. We felt it was but the good man going to his heavenly inheritance. One chapter of his life is written near you. When he removed from this city, he found himself in a neighborhood of some twenty families, most of the adult members of which were members of churches here. There were Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Episcopalians, but not enough of either denomination to sustain a church. At his suggestion, and through his exertions, they united in a Christian society, and in erecting a house of worship, and employing a religious teacher. They then maintained Sunday and week day services, while each retained his own denominational preferences, and resorted to his own peculiar church on sacramental occasions. This little band of Christians continued thus to worship together during his life. I do not know its subsequent history. I am not aware of any other case, where so wise a plan was adopted by a community too small to maintain separate churches for each denomination represented in it. If it were followed in many places, where denominations struggle with each other for precedence, and spend their strength upon questions where they differ, instead of walking together in the things in which they agree, the interests of Christianity, and the spirit of Christian union among those who hold together the leading truths of religion, would be signally promoted.

THOMAS E. CLARKE is another of those honored names. He, too, was a remarkable man. Intellectual, learned and full of kind and social feeling, subdued and tempered by Christian faith. He was a diligent, faithful and efficient collaborer with his life-long friend KING, in teaching the Bible to the young.

I could go through the whole roll. I see there the names of ASAHUEL GRANT, LEWIS BAILEY, EDWARD VERNON, and others, familiar to the early pupils of the classes around



me, but I have no right to occupy more of your time to speak of them.

Permit me, nevertheless, before concluding, to say, it is a quarter of a century since I worshipped with this church. I had known it from my youth, and can bear witness that while I knew it, the lessons from its pulpit, and from the institutions connected with it, were purely catholic. Their aim was to convert souls, and prepare them for a heavenly home; not to make Presbyterians, but Christians. The fruits of the spirit which pervaded them, may be seen in the members of other communions, who, passing from your Sunday School and Bible Classes to the busy world, have come back from their distant homes, to unite in these Jubilee services, and acknowledging them as their nursing mother in Christ. Long, long, I pray, may this spirit actuate her pastors and her whole communion!

Mr. HOVEY K. CLARKE, of Detroit, was next called upon.

ADDRESS OF HOVEY K. CLARKE.

I have never realized, as I do to-night, the flight of time. This is the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sabbath School whose organization is here commemorated. Fifty years! To be fifty years old, how venerable such age once seemed. In the month of February, 1818, within a year and four months of its organization, forty-eight years and eight months ago, and here I first became a Sabbath School scholar. And as I look back to those long past years, how many, how varied, and how interesting are the reminiscences we are invited to indulge in. In attempting this agreeable service, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your permission to be as egotistical as we please; but, my dear sir, did you mean to withdraw that license when you said we *must not be tedious*? Will it be possible to be egotistical and not tedious? Do you remember the old lady's description of a perfect book? A very small book, with a great deal of matter, and a very large print. Such a book, I

fear, will be found not more impossible than to make an egotistical yet not a tedious speech. Nevertheless I will try, and will go on so long as I think you will bear it.

My first connection with this Sabbath School is among the most vivid recollections of my childhood. On a Sunday afternoon, after the second service, my mother asked me if I would not like to go to the Sabbath School. I remember my thought, that it was hardly a proper way to spend the Sabbath. Going to school was the business of the other days of the week; and though it is possible that I may have made this objection, it is more probable that I considered the source whence the proposition came, as a sufficient guaranty of its propriety. I distinctly remember my impression at that time, that the Sabbath School was intended only for the ragged and destitute. Such, probably, was its original purpose; but when it was found that to secure these, it would be necessary to include those who were not destitute of religious instruction at home, then, probably a change was made in the original purpose of the school. It was then held in a building standing on the corner of Genesee and Broad streets, on the lower side of Broad. There, up two flights of stairs, in a room called Minerva Hall, my connection with this school commenced. I have been told since I came here, that no one now remembers the school in Minerva Hall; but there are two living witnesses on this platform who will corroborate my recollection. Of the Superintendent, or who my teacher was in Minerva Hall, I have no recollection whatever. There was one mysterious procedure there, which greatly excited my curiosity. I used to see the little vagabonds led up the stairs in all the rags of their forlorn condition, and into a room adjoining the Hall, whence they were brought out neatly and comfortably clothed. I used to wonder at the transformation then; but it is easy now to recognize the agency of those blessed ladies whose names are written on that tablet as the founders of the school, and whose charities were freely bestowed, as occasion required, to supply

the temporal as well as the spiritual needs of their beneficiaries.

I next remember the school in the old Lancasterian school house on the south side of Catharine street. It was a two story building, in the upper story of which the Masons held their meetings, and fearful stories were told among the boys of the proceedings there. The lower story had been used for the school which gave the name to the building, and also for evening lectures and prayer meetings. Into this room the boys' school was removed, for the boys' school was then, and for a long time after, separate from the girls'. The girls' school was kept, I think, in a school house on the same street near by; but of this, I am not certain.

The first Superintendent I remember was Col. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, the father of your present Superintendent. My teachers, the first I remember was Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE; and when he became Superintendent, he was succeeded by Mr. GEORGE S. WILSON. This was the teacher who made the most indelible impression on my mind. The variety and ingenuity of his devices to interest and instruct his class, were superior to any thing I have ever known in any other teacher. But the discussion of these I waive for the present. After him,—and I was now among the “big boys,” came Mr. FREDERICK S. WINSTON, whose letter has been read this evening, “SEYMOUR WINSTON,” as he was known to us then. My class was now composed of the oldest boys, and he was the youngest teacher, transferred from a class of “little boys” to us, not very long, I think, after he entered the school as a teacher. The class of which these three teachers were successively in charge, was composed at different periods (for the names I mention may not all have been cotemporaries,) of HENRY IVISON, JOHN H. EDMONDS, JAS. D. DANA, S. WELLS WILLIAMS, JAMES M. HOYT, Tom,—I can translate the “Jims” of my boyhood to “James” for the proprieties of this occasion,—but, somehow, to convert “TOM SEWARD” into Thomas, would dissociate him from the scenes I am recalling. I can not “frame to pronounce

it so." TOM SEWARD it was then, [Mr. SEWARD, interrupting, "and it is TOM SEWARD yet,"] GEORGE and GURDON BURCHARD, EDWARD BRIGHT, THOMAS, or rather TOMMY ALLEN CLARKE, for he, I think, was the youngest of our number; and rarely has a class enjoyed the teachings of three such men as PARMELE, WILSON, and WINSTON. I witnessed, some years ago, an interesting scene in the Sabbath School of the First Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, of which our former classmate JAMES M. HOYT, was then Superintendent. It was during the session of the General Assembly, and several of its members had met on a Sabbath morning in that school. Among them was Mr. HENRY IVISON, of New York, and Mr. T. P. HANDY, Superintendent of the school in the Second Presbyterian Church of Cleveland. During some such reminiscences as we are indulging in this evening, the name of TRUMAN PARMELE had been the subject of honorable mention, to which was added, that it was the name borne by our friend Mr. HANDY, —TRUMAN PARMELE HANDY. In the subsequent remarks of Mr. IVISON, he turned to Mr. HANDY and said, "I have known you, sir, for many years as Mr. T. P. HANDY, as Bank Cashier and President in one of the most thriving cities of the West, but I never knew until now that you bore the name so dear to me as TRUMAN PARMELE. I am glad that I can here testify to you and to this assembly how much I owe to that excellent man, who was my teacher in the Sabbath School of the old First Church in Utica."

But to return to the topic which it is not easy to avoid, if I would, on this occasion. There was something in Mr. WILSON's intercourse with his boys, which made his character as a teacher a study of peculiar interest. He was not only laborious and faithful, but he was ingenious in his expedients to fix the attention of his class, the like of which, in all my experience of Sabbath Schools since, I have never seen equalled. His manner was somewhat severe; but the devoted affection of a Christian, seeking to do good, impressed us all beyond the power of time to efface. I remember how he would gather us on some evening during the

week in the "Bindery," a room in the second story of the Seward & Williams' Printing House, where, in the third story of which he, as a printer, was employed; and there by prayer with us, and by affectionate counsels he sought to influence us for good. There, too, I remember he brought out at one of our meetings a blank note book for each one of us, in which we were to take notes of the sermons we heard on the Sabbath. At subsequent meetings, our notes were read and commented on, his object being to quicken our attention to the ministration of the Word, and to promote this object,—to bring upon the hearts of all the scholars, the power of the Word, seemed ever a marked and prominent purpose of those who directed the services of the school.

Out of these weekly meetings to examine our notes of sermons, grew what was known as Mr. WILSON's society for the boys. It embraced, at first, our own class only. Then it was expanded to take in other boys of the school; then the children of parents who were not connected with our church, but who had learned something of the value of Mr. WILSON's influence, and sought it for their own children. These meetings were continued until the society had grown too large; and so, whether by its own weight, or the necessary diversion of Mr. WILSON's time to other engagements, it was finally disbanded.

In the same room, the "Bindery," was projected what I suppose to be the first Sabbath School Magazine ever published in this country, the "*Visitant*." There the plan of the new Sunday School paper was unfolded by Mr. WILSON to his boys, all of whom, I have no doubt, were actively employed in obtaining subscribers for it. How important I thought the agency that was committed to me when, one morning, I stepped on board a canal boat at the dock on Genesee street and went up to Whitesboro, and there, from door to door, I solicited subscribers to the "*Visitant*." I doubt whether in any of my subsequent employments in life I have ever felt the dignity of my mission as I did then.

These reminiscences, Mr. Chairman, interest me more than it is possible they can you, and I fear they will become intolerable unless I end them abruptly; for it will be as impossible to plant a field of corn and leave no outside rows, as it will be to wander on through these recollections of our Sunday School days with the expectation of finding a good place to stop.

The annual examination of the school was another feature which gave great interest to its services, and illustrated the untiring assiduity of its managers to spare no pains to increase its usefulness. In the old wooden church on the corner of Washington and Liberty streets, with the pulpit on the side, and the gallery extending from one side of the pulpit all around the church to the other, the ends of the gallery so near the pulpit that we could look right down upon the sermon, and see when the last leaf was turned: the sounding board over the pulpit so mysteriously sustained in its position, that it was always a wonder to us that it did not fall on the minister's head: in this old church I recall the throng of children filling the cross seats in front of the pulpit back to the wall, the pews on either side and the galleries filled with the interested auditory. This was an event which magnified to the minds of the scholars the importance of the Sabbath School. The great event of these occasions was the oration or address delivered by one of the scholars. The first of these orators, I well remember, was JOHN H. EDMONDS, standing on a platform of school benches placed in the aisle in front of the pulpit. What an oration it seemed to me! How great was my admiration and respect for the boy who could make such a speech as that! But I subsequently learned something myself of the origin of these orations. The second or third in the order of time, the second, I think, fell to my lot. The manuscript of which I have here, folded like a letter, addressed to "Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, Utica:" these ragged places at the folds show how it was worn by carrying in a boy's pocket while he was committing it to memory. This is among my relics of "the dear old

school," as you, Mr. WILLIAMS, so justly called it in your note of invitation to be present on this occasion. This address was written by HARRISON G. O. DWIGHT, who was then a student in Hamilton College, afterwards a missionary to Constantinople, where he spent a life of faithful and laborious service as a missionary of the American Board. And this brings me to another feature prominent in the teachings of the school when I was a scholar. Zeal for Foreign Missions seems to have been a specialty with our superintendents and teachers in those days, and how could they more faithfully exhibit Christianity as a life than by inculcating a love for the work of missions. It is often said that you may measure the vitality of a church by their fidelity to this cause; and well you may, for it was the work of the Master himself, and by him committed to his disciples by his parting words, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." On yonder roll of "Our Missionaries" stands the name of JAMES GARRETT. We were early interested in him, and through him in the work of missions, by means of a correspondence carried on between him and our school. I hold in my hand a letter written by him, dated "Bombay, August 30, 1824," addressed to us as "My dear young friends," and if I could take the time now to read some extracts from it, you would appreciate, I think, the wisdom of the methods employed to interest us in the work to which he had given his life. Two letters were prepared and sent to Mr. GARRETT in reply to this. They both appear in this number of the "*Visitant*," which I have here, "No. 3, Vol. 2, May, 1825," one prepared by a committee of the boys' school, and the other by a committee of the girls' school, each, as the "*Visitant*" affirms, written by the scholars themselves.

The Girls' School. The mention of this starts another train of reminiscences which, if I follow, I must open the most treasured memories of my heart; for they bring me to a name dear to me, and revered and honored by you—the name of my mother. I recall distinctly the time when she first entered upon the Sabbath School work. I was

present during an interview-between her and some ladies who called to invite her to take a class in the school. She replied, "I hardly think I ought to. You know I teach all the week, and I feel that I need the rest of the Sabbath." She consented however to become a supernumerary teacher; that very valuable, but at the same time the least attractive work which the Sabbath School affords, for it involves all the labor and responsibility of the teacher without any of its compensations in the affection of a regular class. It was to be a teacher without a class. This service my mother undertook. How long she continued in it I do not know, but I think not long. I next remember her as the Superintendent of the Female Department, and her labors in this office I have some personal reasons to remember.

When the boys' school was held in the building on Catharine street, and the girls' in the Session Room on Hotel street, there would be frequent occasions for sending messages from one school to the other, and my relation to the Superintendent of the other, installed me as a sort of Sergeant-at-Arms to carry messages from one house to the other. I think I had rather more of this work than was quite agreeable. But I have this gratifying memory of it: I have no more distinct recollection of my mother, than I have of her standing at the side of the desk in the Session Room, and conducting the closing exercises of the school. She continued in this service as long as she lived. My last recollection of her in health, was in consultation with Mr. PARMELE, a few days before the fourth of July, 1827, about the approaching celebration of that day by the Sabbath Schools of the village. As the last of her labors in health were given to this school, so her last, her dying words conveyed an affectionate admonition to its teachers. On that little mourning card, which for so long a period hung on the walls of your Sunday School room, perhaps it hangs there still, her parting words are recorded:

"The dying message of Mrs. Clarke to the teachers of the Sunday School."

"Give my love to the teachers. I hope they will *feel their responsibility* and be FAITHFUL."



With such a message as this from one to whom I owe so much, is there anything that may not be rightfully expected from me to testify my affection for an institution she loved so well, and in which she labored so faithfully. And if my brother who spoke last, has come from his present home, two hundred and fifty miles in the east, to testify his interest in this occasion, it is a trifling service for me to come from my home, five hundred miles in the west, to unite my voice to his.

Indulge me, Mr. Chairman, in one word more. I would repeat with reverent affection those parting words. I desire to hear again the admonition, "Tell them I hope they will feel their responsibility and be faithful." The *responsibility* of the Sunday School work, and the *obligation to fidelity* in it, these are the thoughts whose animating power God grant we may all feel and follow, then may we hope for the rewards of faithful service.

Mr. GURDON BURCHARD, of New York, was the next speaker. He craved the indulgence of the audience, as he was in poor health, and had exerted himself beyond his strength, in order to be present at this most interesting meeting. He was a scholar in the school but eight years; but that had been long enough to endear it to him beyond measure. During that time he formed many valuable and lasting friendships. In this school, he humbly trusted, that he had been converted; and he saw around him now some who gave their hearts to the Saviour at the same time he did, and under the same influences. Mr. BURCHARD related some incidents connected with his own experience in New York Sunday Schools, among the most interesting of which was the following :

In July, 1840, I connected myself with the old Duane Street Presbyterian Church, Dr. GEORGE POTTS, pastor, who was succeeded by Dr. JAMES W. ALEXANDER. The church

now worships in Fifth avenue, corner of Nineteenth street, and its pastor is Dr. N. L. RICE. I began in earnest a new Sabbath School life. I was in the habit of canvassing for children. Among other children, my attention was called by a good lady in our church to a little fellow only six years old—too young to come alone to school. The lady requested me to call next Sabbath morning and bring him with me. According to appointment, I did so. Taking little THEODORE by the hand, we went, he for the first time, to Sabbath School. I put him into the infant class, then under the care of Miss P——, afterwards Mrs. B——. He grew up rapidly, and soon appeared in the class of one of our best teachers, where, for some years, he continued an attentive and excellent scholar. By my own removal from that part of the city, I lost sight of him for many years. About seven years since, having completed some business in the office of the *Independent*, I was accosted by the gentleman with whom it had been transacted with, "Mr. BURCHARD, you don't recollect me." I replied, "No, I do not." "Don't you remember THEODORE TILTON, the little boy you took by the hand to Sabbath School, many years ago?" You can well believe that it was a pleasant meeting. Inquiries were made after his first teacher in the infant class, whose form and manners had made an indelible impression on his memory. As he wished a memento of her of some kind, I promised to send him a framed picture, which was afterwards hung up in his house, that his children might see the likeness of his first Sabbath School teacher. From conversation with him at this interview, I learned many circumstances going to prove conclusively that the current of life is generally turned for good or for evil, by early impressions. He felt himself, that those early years in the Sabbath School were the most important in his life. I am more and more impressed with the conviction that we can not begin too early to store the mind with religious truths. Of late, I have been more thoughtful on this very subject; and especially here, tonight, at this delightful gathering, my mind has gone back

and dwelt upon the early associations of my youth. Those faithful teachers, those praying men and women, they are never to be forgotten. All have left impressions never to be eradicated. These remembrances inspire us with new life to labor, when we think of the faithful labors and self-denying efforts of those who have gone before us.

At the conclusion of Mr. BURCHARD's remarks, the Chairman suspended the intellectual repast, and invited the company to supper.

A table had been bountifully spread by the ladies in the south-west part of the hall, and in that direction the assembly soon found its way. There can be no better incentive to a good appetite than the employment which had so rapidly absorbed the preceding two hours. The repast was excellent. The anniversary cake was cut and served with all the honors, and the grapes from Cleveland received no measured share of notice and praise.

The most pleasing incident of the evening, however, was the informal levee held by its distinguished guest, the honored and only representative present of the five ladies who organized the first Sunday School in Utica. A queen's drawing room would prove to be lighter than vanity if brought in contrast with this unceremonious reception. Unaffected good will and cordial sincerity marked the hour; and the recipient of so much genuine homage found, we trust, ample compensation for its unavoidable fatigue, in the beaming faces of all who sought her presence.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when Mr. JOHN F. SEYMOUR—Judge BACON not returning to the chair—requested the company to come to order, and listen to the last address of the evening, from Mr. THOMAS W. SEWARD.

## ADDRESS OF THOMAS W. SEWARD.

I joined the Utica Union Sabbath School, as it was then called, in the summer of 1820. I have reason to remember the day, for the proposal to go to Sunday School was accepted only after a struggle between disinclination and a habit of obedience. At that time, the Sunday School was by no means the favorite and almost universal institution it has since become in every Christian community. It was but natural that I should regard six days' schooling, with punctual attendance on Divine worship twice every Sunday, as fulfilling every requisite of duty and instruction. On this bright Sunday morning therefore, my steps down Genesee street were unavoidably slow, if not wandering. My Eden was near what is now the corner of Genesee and Fayette streets; while my prospective wilderness lay somewhere about the corner of Genesee and Broad streets. Having, by diligent inquiry, found the place, I slowly clambered up the dingy stairway, that led to the still more dingy apartment, commonly, but not classically known as Minerva Hall. Here I was at once assigned to the class of Mr. JARED E. WARNER, and promptly set to work on the second chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. How large a portion of that chapter I mastered, at the morning and afternoon session of the day, I cannot remember; but, judging by the customary tasks of that time, I may safely say that it was the whole of it. Child as I was, and unfamiliar with differences in signification between words of the same sound, I got some ideas from that first lesson, not to be found in any of the commentaries. Thus, in the twenty-second verse, the words *reign*, and *room*, conveyed no other sense than that of the falling rain, and a room in a house. I allude to this simple incident rather to "point a moral" than "adorn a tale." There was no oral instruction at that day. The required number of verses were recited to the teacher, and that was all that was ever undertaken or accomplished. Members of the same class were seldom engaged at the same time on the same part of the Bible; so that

the school hours were consumed in the mechanical employment of giving and hearing recitations. No pupil ever thought of demanding explanations, and no teacher had time to volunteer any.

Perhaps my respected teacher has forgotten one incident that strongly marked, in my recollection, the close of the afternoon session of my first Sunday School day. As we were all hurrying down the stairway together, he managed, very adroitly and covertly, to make me the possessor of a handful of sugar plums. I was so much surprised with the suddenness of this act of kind partiality, that I neglected to thank him at the only moment when thanks are rendered gracefully. Forty-six years have since rolled away; but as it is never too late to mend, even one's manners, and as I see him here to-night, I avail myself of the opportunity to make the too long neglected repair.

In the summer of the year of grace 1820, the inhabited limits of the village of Utica were mostly confined between the river and the line of the canal, stopping on the west at Potter's Bridge, but extending up Genesee street, in a straggling way, as high as Oneida Square. Cornhill was a forest from South street to the New Hartford line. As you sat on the huge boulder that lay at the head of John street, the whole village was spread out at your feet. There being no intervening shade trees, the most prominent buildings in view, looking down past the Academy, were Baggs' Hotel, the miniature of what it now is, the Utica Insurance building on the corner of Whitesboro and Division streets, and a little to the west of that, the Bank of Utica, and the old York House. All of these slightly overtopped the low ranges of stores on Genesee street. Only two church steeples enlivened the scene, "the Presbyterian" and "the Episcopal;" and they stood like two sentinels, guarding the village nearly on its eastern and western extremes. In exterior the two churches were much alike; the only difference being, that while Trinity rejoiced in pointed arches and a spire, just as she does now, the First Presbyterian was equally happy in the round arch and cupola. Only

one bell, the same that tolled its last note on the disastrous 12th of January, 1851, rang the stipulated week day hours, and called the people to worship on Sunday. A pleasant forest, the favorite haunt of boys on Saturday afternoon, covered the Sand Bank, and skirting the gardens on the west side of Genesee street, came down the slope as far as Columbia street, extended west nearly to Varick street, and on beyond as far as the Asylum Hill. The aristocratic poplars, the common badge and sole ornament of all new villages, stood in unbroken row from Bleecker street to the hill top. The best dwelling houses were unequally divided between Whitesboro, Genesee, and Broad streets. Main street had, apparently, more buildings than it has now. It was lined with the comely residences of prosperous citizens, among whom I cannot forbear naming Dr. AMOS G. HULL, long known in this region of country as one of its most eminent physicians, and remarkable for genial traits of character. At the lower end of the street stood the pleasant mansion and grounds of Judge MORRIS S. MILLER. The spot is classic in Revolutionary history, for here was Old Fort Schuyler. Over in Whitesboro street, were the Bank of Utica, the Manhattan Branch Bank, and the Utica Insurance Company. It was the Wall street of the village. Here, too, was the old York House, for years the most famous hotel in the western country; and, besides this, were the well-remembered inns of BURCHARD and BELLINGER. This was the most populous street of the village, numbering, I have no doubt, nearly as many inhabitants as it does now. The triangular space known as Bagg's Square, was then called the Hay-market, and was the focus of the town. Here were the hay scales, the town pump, and the *fly market*,—so called, for aught that I could ever learn, because it was on wheels. But its flights never extended beyond Division street, where it was prone to tarry, out of the way of its rivals, the pump and the hay scales. Genesee street was poorly built. Except the Ontario Bank, there was nothing really presentable in it. Most of the stores were wooden and rickety. The only brick block having any claim to

respectability was the one opposite Broad street, a good part of which still remains. The street was unpaved, and the mud, at times, profound. The side-walks were flagged, but the flagging bore as faint a resemblance to the modern sand stone as the croppings of geological strata. But the business of the street, prosecuted under local disadvantages of which the present generation can form no idea, was a sure fountain of prosperity to all who had part in it. And the street itself, like all business haunts, had its two or three notable features. Here was the noisy tin and copper factory of JAMES DELVIN, the din of whose upper lofts strove in vain to deafen the monotonous rattle and clank of the nail machines plied by the swarthy inmates of the cellar. Here, too, was daily to be found the ancient vendue crier of PETER BOURS, going his solemn rounds with staff and bell. Opposite the Post Office, then kept by MARCUS HITCHCOCK, was the Museum, with its hand organ of vicious tone. That hand organ was a weariness to the flesh, whatever it may have been to the study of "minute philosophies." Its barrel had just six tunes,—one for each secular day. I cannot say positively what day was assigned to the doleful air of "Bonaparte crossing the Rhine," but presume it was Friday. On that day, business down town might as well have been suspended. Buyers and sellers were at loggerheads all day long. The banks refused to discount, and merchants quit the field at night, their thoughts intent only upon assignments.

Broad street was occupied as far down as the canal; but it did not contain more than half its present number of buildings. Most of its dwelling houses were equal in style to any in the country, and were all provided with ample side yards and gardens. The shade trees, which had already attained a thrifty growth, are nearly all now standing in giant pride. Catharine street was a pleasant, quiet street, occasionally putting forth an abortive effort to rival its neighbor below. The digging of the canal so near its upper margin settled its fate, however, and consigned it to the condition it has held ever since. Liberty street was

built up as far as Broadway. At the corner of Seneca street was the house of RUDOLPH SNYDER, and at the corner of Broadway, that of THOMAS WALKER. I single these out for mention, because of the remarkable fact that they are both standing to-day, unchanged either by decay or innovation. Opposite the canal side of Mr. Walker's house, and on the ground now held by Hart & Munson's establishment, was the stone mansion house of JAMES KIPP, an ornament to the landscape. Beyond this, all was sweet fields and the quiet woods.

Above the canal, they were beginning to tear down the Coffee House, a brick hotel, that covered rather more than the ground now occupied by the Devereux Block. I do not know when this building was erected; but it must have been an unfortunate investment, for it was occupied as Barracks in the war of 1812, and, at the date of my earliest recollections, such was its dismantled state, that none of us youngsters ever passed it without an unaccountable fear. Opposite the old Coffee House, SAMUEL STOCKING was converting his dwelling house and the cabinet shop of RUDOLPH SNYDER into the new Canal Coffee House, afterwards so long known by all who traveled by stage or canal. About half way between this and the Bleecker street corner, was the house of Judge DAVID OSTROM, now embodied in the Franklin House. The corner itself was defaced by a group of shabby buildings which included a blacksmith and carriage shop, and a grocery. That grocery was no rum shop. It was a home of patient industry; and I cannot pass it without stopping to praise its famous molasses candy, and the good woman who made and vended it. Bleecker street was opened, but was neither fenced nor housed. It was mainly used in summer as a cow path to pastures beyond it. In winter, its frozen ditches made a very fair skating park. Above the canal, there were no streets leading westward out of Genesee street. The Supreme Court Clerk's office stood in isolated state on the same ground now occupied by its successor, the County Clerk's Office. The spot where we are now convened, and the ground all



around it, was trampled over and over in the unceasing game of base ball, which went on from April to November.

The most conspicuous buildings in this part of the village were, first, the mansion of JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER, whose fine grounds comprised nearly the whole space now bounded by Elizabeth, Charlotte, Carnahan, and Genesee streets; and next, that of ARTHUR BREESE, the place of which is now occupied by the range of dwellings opposite the City Hall. I am very sure that the only householder in Utica, who will sleep to-night under the same roof that sheltered him in that year, is Mr. ALEXANDER B. JOHNSON. His house, together with those of Mr. CHARLES S. WILSON, and the late Judge GRIDLEY, once the homes respectively of Mr. THOMAS E. CLARK and Gen. JOSEPH KIRKLAND, are the only landmarks left of Genesee street above the canal, of the year 1820.

In the summer of 1820, Miss SUSAN WHITE was teaching school in the low wing room of the building on Hotel street next below Mechanics' Hall, the same room in which our Sunday school was first opened in 1816. A large select school, under Mr. BLISS, was in operation in the Presbyterian Session Room, then standing where Grace church now rears its massive walls. I cannot recall the name of the Principal of the Academy; but old Mr. HAYES was there, hearing two classes read in Goldsmith's History of America, and teaching penmanship; occasionally droning out, as he nibbed his pen, an anecdote of the "Rev-o-lu-tion-a-ry W-a-r." The second class in History was composed of one individual, who was the sole occupant of a long, high bench without a back, from which his feet never touched the floor during the long, desolate hours. This class was ambitious to overtake the other in its historical career; and as the venerable teacher always expected his pupil to find the beginning of each lesson, there occurred, I fear, some serious gaps in the history of America. When, at length, the second class overtook, and forged ahead of its imaginary rival, its triumph was complete. The system of penmanship taught by Mr. HAYES was neither Rightmyer's, Payson's

nor the Spencerian; but it made capital penmen, as the handwriting of many of our citizens bears witness to this day.

In the summer of that same year also, freight boats were still plying on the Mohawk River between Utica and Schenectady, propelled on their devious way by oars, setting poles, and sails. I am not sure that passenger boats were not also still running on the river, sometimes making the downward run, under favorable auspices, between sunrise and sunset of a summer day. Ordinarily they tarried over night at Palatine Bridge; but frequently getting aground on the shifting bars of the stream, their passengers had to find their way, in search of shelter, through woods and ploughed fields to the remote tavern or farm house. On the turnpike, the five and seven horse teams, like an army train, still dragged their enormous wagon loads over the "dike" and covered bridge, awoke the echoes of the street with their jingling bells, then slowly disappeared over the crest of the hill.

The middle, and first completed section of the Erie Canal, reaching from Genesee street bridge ninety-six miles to the village of Montezuma, was just finished and brought into use. The little packet boat *Enterprise*, in size and shape not unlike a city omnibus without wheels, was plying between Utica and Rome. The *Montezuma* and *Oneida Chief*, guarantied to run four miles an hour, had begun tri-weekly trips between Genesee street and Montezuma, consuming two days in the voyage, because of their lying by for the night in the howling wilderness, a few miles east of Syracuse. The untried dangers of the route were not to be tempted after nightfall. The indefatigable stage coaches of J. PARKER & Co. were carrying the mails and the traveling world to and fro between Albany and Buffalo, disdaining in their route the hamlets of Syracuse and Rochester, but permitting their passengers to be refreshed with food and sleep at such stopping places as Onondaga Hill and Avon. In State politics, the rallying party cries were "Bucktail" and "Clintonian." Of National parties there were none;

for this was "the era of good feeling." The temple of Janus was politically closed, and the next ensuing month of November was to behold the re-election of JAMES MONROE to the Presidency without opposition.

My recollections of the Sunday School in Minerva Hall after my first day's attendance, are but vague and indistinct. Probably my connection with it was broken more or less, as, during those years, much of my time was passed away from home with family relatives. I do not remember in what year the school was removed to Catharine street; but my recollection of all that occurred during the occupancy of the old Lancaster school room in Catharine street is still vivid. Here, after a short time, I found myself in the class of GEORGE S. WILSON, Col. WILLIAM WILLIAMS being Superintendent, though he was soon succeeded in that office by TRUMAN PARMELE. Our class occupied the south east corner of that room, and had for its members, first and last, JOHN H. EDMONDS, EDWARD BRIGHT, HENRY IVISON, S. WELLS WILLIAMS, JAMES D. DANA, HOVEY K. CLARKE, THOMAS ALLEN CLARKE, GEORGE and GURDON BURCHARD, and GEORGE WALKER. The school was here so prosperous that it ultimately became both advisable and necessary to break it up, and restore its parts to the three religious denominations to which it chiefly belonged. It was about this time that great improvements were made in the method of instruction. The order of school was thoroughly systematized. More time was devoted to oral instruction. The relation between teacher and pupil became in consequence, more intimate. The long recitations gave place to the fifteen verse system; for exorbitant recitations had been the source of much vain rivalry and dissension. He who could recite the greatest number of verses at one time, became a sort of champion. The highest number that I recollect to have been reached, without prompting or faltering, was five hundred. This extraordinary feat was accomplished by one who is now one of the most eminent publishers of this country; and he brought to that task the same energy that

has since spread the Pictorial Primer and Sanders' Readers over half the continent.

At the time of which I am now speaking, there were no Question Books or other helps of the kind in use. The four gospels were committed to memory and recited over and over again. Some few of us ventured into the Epistles; but only the more ambitious remained there long enough to master their intricate phraseology. Most of us were beaten after a struggle more or less severe, and then retreated to the secure base of the Gospels. Exact recitations were required. The analytical method of instruction had not come into fashion. We were literalists in those days; and having unwittingly adopted the sound maxim that "words are things," words and ideas became with us one flesh, never thereafter to be put asunder.

While in Catharine street, a plan was inaugurated of holding religious service in the school room on Sunday afternoons. No church pastor ever took part in these exercises, and the teachers seldom did more than lead in worship. The speakers were usually middle aged and elderly men of the town, who, having no connection with the school, were not in immediate sympathy with it. After one season's trial, the project was abandoned, and the boys were wisely restored to the family pew or the cozy gallery.

The school discipline was exceedingly rigid. The quarterly reports of the teachers, read in open school, at the heads of their classes, dealt with each member of the class individually; bestowing liberal praise where praise was deserved, and, with equal justice, condemning the thoughtless and delinquent. Quarter day, with some of us, was a day of apprehension; for we knew, from melancholy experience, that, with all their other gifts, some of our teachers had a rare gift in holding the mirror up to nature. One case of discipline is perhaps worthy of mention, as illustrating the rigorous method of dealing with offenders in those days. A small party of our boys, one sunny Sunday afternoon in early summer, instead of going inside, were tempted to appropriate the hours of worship to their own

devices in the spacious yard of the church. I am not aware that they disturbed either the neighborhood or the congregation. The most unseemly act they were guilty of was mounting the village hearse, and making that sombre vehicle a lounging place, after they had exhausted their measure of frivolity. These graceless youths appeared punctually at the afternoon session of the school, and behaved with a demure sobriety refreshing to witness. But they left the room sadder and wiser than when they entered it. In their case, no time was wasted in trying the efficacy of moral suasion. They were not even allowed the poor privilege of pleading guilty; but, at the close of school, having first been excoriated by the Superintendent, were summarily expelled. I hardly need to add that contrite penitence, and many tears were the natural sequel; and, that in answer to their written confession and petition, they were fully restored on the next Sunday, and were ever afterwards models of good behavior.

The first Sunday School anniversary, or public examination, was held in the Presbyterian church in the summer of 1824. Never was the house more densely crowded than on that night. It being the first affair of the kind, and exceedingly brilliant in many of its details, fears were expressed by many of the warmest friends of the school that its effects would not be salutary. But I have reason to believe that only the opposite of their apprehensions was realized. I am fortunately able to tell you who were in the pulpit that evening. Besides Mr. AIKEN, the pastor of the church, there were Mr. WILLEY, of the Baptist church, Mr. BRACE, of the second Presbyterian, Mr. FROST, of Whitestown, Mr. VANDERLIP, of Albany, and Mr. SHIMMALL, of the Hamilton Theological Seminary. Reports, showing a highly prosperous condition of both male and female departments, were read by the Superintendents of each. The classes had been carefully prepared in appropriate exercises, and gave their recitations accurately and promptly. Near the close of the exercises, the meeting was addressed by one of the foremost boys of the school.

This address was so happily written, and well delivered, that, if I mistake not, the young orator was in great request for private rehearsals, weeks afterward. It may be, that looking through the haze of years, the eye of memory unduly magnifies the scenes of that evening. But there was one exercise which must escape this imputation; one which I never recall to mind without increased emotion. The different titles by which our Saviour is known in Scripture, had been collated and assigned to the required number of boys, to be repeated in rapid succession. As these names of the Redeemer were shouted forth by those youthful voices, the effect was absolutely startling. A second Handel might here have found his inspiration for a new Messiah.

About this time there appeared on the scene the most remarkable man whom it has been my fortune to know. Captain CHARLES STUART, a retired half-pay officer of the British army, assumed charge of the Utica Academy, and at once joined himself to every good work in town. To say that Captain STUART was eminently pious, actively benevolent, unsurpassedly kind, rigidly austere, and wildly eccentric, is to give you, after all, but a faint idea of what the man really was. He had all the virtues that adorn humanity seemingly in excess. It is, therefore, not strange, that he was regarded by a majority of his fellow men as a fanatic. His eccentricities were a part of that growth that comes of the highest religious culture. His faults were known only to the Omniscient. His tender-heartedness was that of woman; and yet no one ever more relentlessly vindicated, when occasion required, the majesty of offended law by prompt and stern punishment. Of course, this man was the children's friend. They felt that he belonged to them. In spirit, he, too, was a child. How they would flock around him. How they clung to him. They made him the willing partner of all their joys and sorrows, and of their sports as well. The hour before the opening of morning school at the Academy was usually one of hilarious mirth, in which there was no sport too boisterous for

him to engage in. Often, of a Saturday afternoon, I have known him to marshal the Academy boys in mimic warfare, on the open common which now makes Chancellor Square. At such times, it was a matter of equal indifference to him whether he took the part of leader, private, or musician. The hardships of his early, soldier life, which was passed in India, had doubtless much to do with his asceticism of habit. But he made it subservient to the great end always held steadfastly in view. His rooms in the Academy building were as scantily furnished as the cell of an anchorite. His bed was a pallet of straw, but those rooms were always redolent of the breath of flowers.

Since coming here to-night, I have learned that he has passed away. It has been said that it is not safe to praise the living. I had intended to ask you, in this case, to allow me to suspend the rule. To me, there is now a melancholy satisfaction in the assurance, that his eye can never be offended with this eulogium.

Since the days of Captain STUART's preceptorship, how has the scene changed, which knew him so well! An incendiary fire has destroyed the building which, for many years, was the pride of the village. In those days, Chancellor Square existed only on the surveyor's map. A high and rugged roadway, known as Miller's turnpike, but now as Bridge street, and built expressly to rival Genesee street, traversed the naked common like a military field work. Between the Academy and Genesee street, there was scarcely a house. All the domain that lay to the south of the Academy, was known as Slayton's Bush, and its inhabitants as "Bushwhackers." This was prior to the day of gymnastic schools, which a few years afterwards sprung up so rapidly throughout the country; but the Academy felt no want of athletic sports. In the rough game of "snap the whip," there were always boys willing enough to make a long lash, and ample room to swing it on the open common. At one time a spring-board was established just outside the Academy yard. I cannot aver that the coming of the circus had nothing to do with this

spring-board; but the circus itself, although it had "come to stay," failed to entice our boys within its walls; for the parental negative had been strongly re-enforced by the timely sermon of Mr. AIKEN on Public Amusements. In the spring of the year, the freshets would send a miniature river through the wide ditches of the turn-pike, which, being dammed opposite the Academy, a system of slack water navigation was gaily extemporized. Rafts came next, then, in inevitable order, a wet chapter of accidents, and one day, if reports were not greatly exaggerated, we came near drowning one who now occupies the first rank among the world's great Naturalists.

If you ask why, on an occasion like this, I dwell with so much fondness on incidents and scenes not immediately connected with it; I reply, that, at that time, the Utica Union Sabbath School, and the Utica Academy, were, in a certain sense, nearly convertible terms. Captain STUART'S system of discipline and instruction was eminently religious, and it was so spontaneously and naturally. In occasional remarks, at the opening or closing of his own school, he would often allude, as a matter of course, to occurrences in the other. Besides, nearly all his pupils, after studying and playing together during the week, met again on Sunday for religious instruction. He was probably the first teacher in this country to introduce the practice of singing a hymn in school worship. Ah! my comrades, can you ever forget how those walls re-echoed the grand old tune of Rochester? Do you not again hear these words,

"Amazing pity! grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree."

Do you not even now see the noble form of our venerated friend, with hands meekly folded on the breast, in his customary attitude of prayer? Do you not again hear those pleading tones for mercy, as, with rapt, irradiate gaze, he seemed to behold the mercy seat!

A delightful episode in the history of our Sunday School is that of "The Juvenile Society for Learning and Doing



Good." That was its corporate title, terse and significant. Its founder was GEORGE S. WILSON, its nucleus was the members of his class. At first, and for some time afterwards, its meetings were held on Wednesday evenings in the school room of Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, on Broad street, near the present Sherman House. Mr. WILSON exerted only a supervisory and restraining influence over his society. He held no office in it; but after framing for them a suitable code of laws, he wisely left the management entirely in the hands of his boys. But no meeting could be held without his presence. No fraternity of human contrivance, whether it makes itself coeval with Jerusalem's temple, or tortures the Greek alphabet into a cabalistic name, was ever more ardently loved by its members than this. What pride they had in it. How eagerly they repaired, on the appointed night, to the old school room. With what grave decorum was the routine of parliamentary forms gone through. Business dispatched, what fine variety of amusement and instruction followed.

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

Bear in mind that I am not describing a society of young men. We were only boys—not one of us being, at the time of which I speak, more than fifteen years old. But much as we loved our society and each other, we all felt that its soul, as well as its brain were incorporate in its beloved founder. He was indeed a rare man. That generation may well call itself fortunate which produces his equal. Mr. WILSON's great success with boys lay in the fact that he always treated them as his equals. He never claimed the slightest superiority over the humblest even of his young friends. And yet, he was a man of the greatest dignity. With what beautiful deference would he listen to their suggestions and speculations, no matter how crude. Himself a man of but limited education and acquirement at that time, but blessed with a vigorous intellect, he sought and obtained knowledge from every source. No doubt his boys helped him to many a fine idea. How much of good-

ness they learned of him, or might have learned, can be disclosed only at the final audit.

The surviving members of the Juvenile Society are fast approaching the days of "the sere and yellow leaf." Their early and steadfast friend departed while he was comparatively young. It becomes them, while time is given, to omit no opportunity of doing honor to his memory.

The division of the Union School occurred in the year 1826. The division did not wholly destroy its unity; for its parts were numbered 1, 2, and 3, and the whole was still called the Union Sabbath School. At, or about the time of the breaking up, Division No. 1, which was the Presbyterian School, was transferred from the rather sombre quarters in Catharine street to the second story of the Session Room No. 10 Hotel street. This story had just been added, for our accommodation, to the original building already occupied by the girl's school. The new apartment was pleasant and commodious, and great was the rejoicing when we took possession. I here found myself in the class of FREDERIC S. WINSTON, with nearly the same mates who were previously under Mr. WILSON. It was then and there that our class formally made up its mind that it comprised the *élite* of the school. If there is here to-night a single cotemporary who did not belong to "SEYMOUR WINSTON'S class," I have to say, that, while I would not hurt his feelings by invidious comparisons, candor will not permit me to regard him as any other than an object of pity. Mr. WINSTON was a most successful teacher, a quiet enthusiast in all Sunday School matters, and a captivator of boys' hearts. For many years past he has been prominently identified in the city of New York, with its commercial, benevolent, and religious enterprises. We have reason to be grateful that the day for pronouncing his eulogy has not yet come. May that coming be long delayed.

Our school was now in most prosperous condition, and was held as a model far and near. I recollect that in the year 1826, being then at Mr. GROSVENOR'S school in Rome, when I joined the Presbyterian Sunday School of that vil-

lage, I was greatly embarrassed by the attention paid to "the boy from Utica," and by the many inquiries of the Superintendent about the management of what he was pleased to term, "that famous school."

In the year 1827, the first Fourth of July Sunday School Celebration was held in Utica. These celebrations afterwards became very general throughout the country. On this day the three schools appeared on our streets in great force, all marshaled under appropriate banners, and moved in procession to the First Presbyterian Church, where Mr. GEORGE DUTTON, senior, received us with a triumphal burst of music from the organ. The Rev. Mr. HARRISON, of the Baptist Church, conducted the opening exercises. The Rev. Mr. AIKEN delivered an address on the "Political Influence of Sabbath Schools." The exercises were freely interspersed with singing, and were closed by the Rev. Mr. GILES, of the Methodist Church. On leaving the church, we were marched to an unfinished storehouse yet standing just below Culver's elevator, in the upper story of which ample refreshment had been provided. Seven hundred and forty children, waited upon by one hundred and fifty teachers, sat down to meat at six long tables. The guests of the dinner were the Rev. CHARLES G. FINNEY and the venerable WILLIAM WOODBRIDGE, who, at the close of it, made a most feeling and eloquent address. The collation itself was in keeping with the simple habits of that day. It consisted of rusks and lemonade. Nothing more.

In the course of this address I have alluded twice to the old church; and this reminds me that I have a duty to discharge in behalf of that almost forgotten edifice. It is hallowed in the memories of a few who still walk our streets, and doubtless in the memories of many more than these, who have found new homes, and made reputations all over the world. The favorite sitting place of our boys in this church was in what was called the back gallery. In order that you may understand what is meant by the back gallery, I must describe the building itself. It was long and narrow in outline, and the pulpit, instead of being at

the end, was placed on the north side of the building. There were two detached, semi-circular galleries, one at each end. The front gallery was reached by stairs in the tower, and the back gallery by a stairway in a rear porch. Time was, but it was long before my Sunday School days, when the church choir was divided between these galleries, the trebles taking the front, and the basses and tenors the one opposite. They were sixty or seventy feet apart, but they were a powerful host altogether; and they had a way of tossing back and forth the fugue harmonies of their day, which makes the modern Old Folks' Concerts but a meagre entertainment to those who remember the ancient Young Folks.

It requires no strong effort of memory and imagination, to place myself again in the family pew, and, glancing around, to recognize in their accustomed seats, JONAS PLATT, JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER, ARTHUR BREESE, JOHN H. LOTHROP, ERASTUS CLARK, WILLIAM H. MAYNARD, TALCOTT CAMP, DAVID W. CHILDS. This list might be largely increased were I to give the names of all the prominent men of the congregation, who belonged to that generation. But I have named only those who have been dead over thirty-three years. SAMUEL C. AIKEN, in the year 1818, succeeded HENRY DWIGHT as pastor. Mr. DWIGHT had ruined his voice, as was said, "by preaching across the arches;" for the pillars and arches were at that time arranged precisely as they stand in Trinity Church to-day. The church was always full, above and below. Even at that early day the choir was noted for its proficiency. It was the custom for worshipers to sit during the singing, and to stand while at prayer; and neither man, woman, nor child would have dared to violate decorum by a breach of either observance. In winter, the house was but indifferently warmed; but the women were comfortable in the huge muffs and tippetts then in fashion, to say nothing of the foot stoves and heated blocks of wood. As for the men, they wore great coats of many capes piled one above the other, the number of which formed, in my childish

estimation, the measure of the owner's respectability. In summer, nothing could be pleasanter than the church and its surroundings. The Sunday wore the peculiar quiet of a Puritan village. Few equipages were kept. There was no "car rattling o'er the stony street." Most of the congregation found their way to and from church, on foot, through Liberty street, making an imposing procession in that thoroughfare. I cannot remember the time when ISAAC MERRELL did not ring the bell; his feats with the bell rope, being the admiration of the group of urchins which loved to tarry in the porch, while the ringing was joyously in progress, and going inside only after the tolling was all solemnly done.

Among the memorable events in the history of the old church, was the marriage of ELISHA LOOMIS and MARIA SARTWELL, missionaries to the Sandwich Islands. Whether it was the first wedding ever held there, I cannot say; but public weddings were rare at that day. It was an occasion of deep interest, for the missionary spirit was rife in the land; and this pair belonged to the first detachment sent to the Islands, by the American Board. After the marriage ceremony, a reception, as it would now be called, was held at my father's house, the bride having been almost a member of the family. A few days afterwards, and a tearful group of friends were seen on the steps of the house, taking, what was supposed to be, a final adieu of the young missionaries. A few days later still, and the city of Boston witnessed the solemn and imposing ceremonies which attended the embarkation of the band to which they belonged, and heard, for the first time, the notes of that inspiring hymn of TAPPAN'S,

"Wake, Isles of the South."

In the year 1821, an alteration of the interior of the building, which involved a removal of the obnoxious columns and arches, compelled the people to vacate it for the summer. They did not go to the Court House, as is the habit now of distressed and houseless congregations, but

frankly accepted the neighborly invitation of their friends of "Trinity," to come down into Broad street, and occupy their church half the time. So every Sunday afternoon, pastor, choir, and congregation took their proper places in that now venerable edifice, and did not seem to feel that they were in the house of a stranger.

In the autumn of 1825, the old church was incidentally connected with a great event and a great name. The completion of the Erie canal was celebrated by the passage, from Lake Erie to Sandy Hook, of a flotilla of boats, having on board, among other distinguished men, the chiefs of the State government. Leaving Buffalo on Wednesday morning, it was their intention to be in Utica on Saturday night; but unforeseen delays procrastinated their arrival until Sunday noon. In the afternoon they attended divine worship at this church. The crowded audience was hushed to stillness as the silent procession, led by Governor DE WITT CLINTON, came in, and took its place in the wall pews on the south side. The text of the sermon was "God is good." Few men could do better justice to such an occasion, than Mr. AIKEN. He was then in the vigor of manhood, at that happy period of life when men are in possession of their best powers, of engaging address, and most impressive pulpit manner. Those who were so fortunate as to hear that sermon, have not forgotten the fine elaboration of its theme, and its eloquent application to the hour; nor the felicitous style in which the preacher congratulated his illustrious auditor on the propitious ending of the great work of his life, and of that era.

The spring of the year 1826, was signalized in the history of this building, by the advent of the Rev. CHARLES G. FINNEY, then in the dawn of his career as a revivalist. The village of Rome had been the scene of his labors for months previous. It was there, I believe, that his remarkable career began. We soon beheld the same results which uniformly followed the preaching of this great disturber, alike of religious tranquility, and of consciences torpid through indifference, or hardened by trans-

gression. Mr. FINNEY's acknowledged intellectual force attracted, no doubt, many of our citizens who, at that time of religious interest would hardly have listened to a less gifted expounder of the Divine law. His exposition of that law was original and bold. Its novel character, and its extraordinary fruits, soon became the universal themes either of admiration or criticism. For months, the revival eclipsed all other interests. In no other season of religious inquiry was a whole community known to have been so entirely absorbed in the great pursuit; and in no other season of religious inquiry, was there probably less of that peculiar tenderness and hopefulness of spirit which usually predominate. As I have already hinted, Mr. FINNEY's treatment of religious quietude was as merciless as his dealings with the wicked conscience. In the religious world he may be said to have inaugurated a brief reign of terror. There can be no question that his stern methods were oftentimes as necessary as they were wholesome; but it was a most singular fact, that among those whose hearts most failed them for fear, were found many who had adorned years of religious profession by lives unspotted from the world.

I allude to Mr. FINNEY's first visit to Utica, not so much because it left an ineffaceable impression on the memory, as because it forms the most notable chapter in the brief biography I am trying to give. He was chary, rather than prodigal of sermons; preaching only in the afternoon or evening of Sundays. In this respect, he practiced a wise reserve which undoubtedly told upon the general work of reform with great effect. The scene in the crowded church, on these occasions was solemn beyond description. No unworthy accessories to heighten the interest, or deepen the solemnity, were ever employed. Beyond some unaffected, yet striking peculiarities of voice and manner in the speaker, there was nothing to attract curiosity, or offend even the most fastidious or carping sense of propriety. It is an inadequate tribute of praise, to say of his preaching that, whether it was distinguished most for intellectual sub-

tlety, stormy denunciation of sin, or fearful portrayal of the wrath to come, it had its reward in unwonted accessions to the Christian ranks, and renewed vigor of religious life. As a pulpit orator, his place among the foremost of his time was long ago assured.

In the summer of 1826 the foundations of a new church edifice were laid, a few feet distant from the old one; and in the fall of 1827, the new building being completed, the hour came of final adieu to the time-honored church. On the last Sunday in October of that year, the congregation met for the last time within its walls. I believe no notice had been given that there was to be a farewell sermon, but the attendance was instinctively larger than usual. The sermon, like all occasional discourses of Mr. AIKEN, was marked by fine adaptation. The prosperous state of the church, and its auspicious future were the themes most dwelt upon; and his allusions to the past had less of sadness than of gratulation. The last hymn was sung,—the final benediction pronounced,—and as the throng emerged through the doorways, if any eyes were moistened as they cast a lingering, fond look at the modest old sanctuary, they quickly brightened with gratified approval, as they glanced at the stately new walls and lofty steeple which towered at its side.

Finally, the old church was neither torn down nor burned up. It was dismembered. The larger part of it went over the canal and rested at the corner of Fayette and Washington streets, where it has been known for many years as the Mansion House. Another part found its way down into Whitesboro street, where it took the nature of a double tenement house, distinguishable, to this day, from all its neighbors, by high shouldered walls and thinness of flank. The lower part of the tower found a new home in Water street, near the foot of Washington, where you can find it to-day, just where the railway tracks leave the street, and take to the fields. It makes the front part of a modest dwelling. The house, as a whole, is quite unpretending; but its front entrance is decidedly ambitious, being nothing



less than the identical large, double doors which first swung open on dedication day, and finally closed on the church when its congregation had no further need of it. The belfry of the steeple was carefully taken down, and set up again on a new market building in Bleecker street. What became of the section above it, I never knew. Perhaps it was mislaid. But they saved the tinned dome that covered it, and put it on the old belfry, which being a world too wide for it, the whole affair served for years to suggest the idea of a steeple built on the telescopic plan, with one slide perpetually shut down.

It was a singular ordering of events which placed the third edifice of the church in such close neighborhood to the first. A poetio fancy might find in the situation something worth elaborating, were it not for one element of incongruity which I need not name. A prosaic fancy will probably see in it only an illustration of the progress of wealth and architectural taste in fifty years. The sentiment of one of our own best poets, that no building is so old that it ought to be torn down, I would amend, by insisting that no building, associated either with the religious or domestic affections, should be suffered to stand, if otherwise, it must be diverted to unhallowed purposes. How many churches in our land must grieve, "if aught inanimate e'er grieves," over the base uses to which they have come at last.

But I must return to the boys in the back gallery. My brother CLARKE told you, a little while ago, that the corner seat there, near the pulpit, was an excellent post from which to watch the progress of the sermon. I never knew before why that seat was in so much request by certain of our number. So high was the standard of behavior carried in our day, that the post of provost marshal in that gallery would have been a sinecure. We were left to ourselves, and we took good care of ourselves. The introduction of the organ made more of a commotion amongst the denizens of our retreat, than in any other part of the congregation. Not that it trespassed upon our domain. An organ loft was built for its reception on the south side, opposite the

pulpit, and, in this way, the detached galleries were united on that side. In our estimation that organ was the marvel of the age. We were happy in that we could see it during the whole service, and witness the manipulations by which Mr. DUTTON drew from it such wondrous tones. In bidding a final adieu to the old church, I would remind you that its organ was the first one put up in any Presbyterian church in America.

In the summer of 1828 I graduated at the Sunday School, and was promoted to the Bible class. During most of the period of eight years in which I belonged to the school, TRUMAN PARMELE was its Superintendent. Other pens and voices have already, and will continue, while these exercises are in progress, to portray his virtues and recount his praise. I never knew Mr. PARMELE intimately. He was never my teacher; and, in his office of Superintendent, I was never brought into any close relation with him. I can still see his manly form, and handsome, youthful face in the Superintendent's desk in Catharine street—still hear his pleasant voice, urging his young friends to choose the better part, or at times authoritatively bringing the school into quick order and attention. In the history of this school, there is no name more conspicuous than his, and no untimely death was ever more sincerely mourned in this community than his.

In the Bible class, I was so fortunate as to be put into the class of WALTER KING. Here I met again many of my old comrades. The year that I passed under the instruction of this most excellent gentleman and profound biblical scholar was one of great profit. Mr. KING's knowledge of sacred literature was varied and exact. No man whom I have ever known had so ready a way of disposing of troublesome questions and doubts. In warfare with infidelity, he was a gladiator. Everything went down before him. He was in the habit of giving much of his time with his class to the besetting mistake of young men, unbelief; and he did wisely. More than all, he was not squeamish. He would handle the weapons of infidelity as the magician

does his swords, or the Indian juggler his serpents, and he bade us do likewise. It was a high compliment he paid his class—and in complimenting them he honored himself—when he bade us explore, if we chose to, “the dark mountains of unbelief,” and pluck, but not to eat of every poisoned herb that grew there.

I can not close this address without giving expression to the pleasure its preparation has afforded me, nor without thanking the friend whose timely hint first put me in the way of gathering a fresh enjoyment from the faded past. If, in what I have said, there has been anything like appreciation of the past at the expense of the present, or too much babbling of the green fields of boyhood, consider, that the period over which we have just been hastily traveling together, was the “Golden Prime.”

The meeting was closed by benediction pronounced by Rev. Father GLEASON.

## SUNDAY MORNING.

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The Sabbath morning of our JUBILEE dawned beautiful and bright, and nature seemed to vie with friends to see which should do most to make the day delightful.

The School was early gathered in full numbers, in their pleasant room, which kindly hands had tastefully decorated and trimmed for them, as a welcome to the former scholars: two beautiful wreaths hung upon the marble tablets erected to the memory of Mrs. MARY E. OSTROM and THOMAS MAYNARD, while the names of the five founders of the School hung upon the wall.

After the opening exercises, the scholars sung a hymn of welcome, and instead of the usual lessons, the morning hour was occupied by short addresses from the Superintendent; ROBERT B. SHEPARD, of Hudson, N. Y.; SAMUEL E. WARNER, of the Tract House, New York, and Rev. SAMUEL L. MERRELL, of Theresa, N. Y. The remarks were all suited to the occasion: Mr. SHEPARD giving an interesting account of the little mourning tablet printed by him forty years ago, in memory of a beloved teacher, Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, conveying her dying request to the School, which was, "Give my love to the teachers. I hope they will *feel their responsibility* and be FAITHFUL," and which has been hanging upon the walls of this School ever since. Messrs. WARNER and MERRELL, alluded to the pleasing incidents connected with various teachers and scholars, celebrations, processions and picnics, which occurred during their Sunday School days.

The tolling bell, however, interrupted these pleasant services with its summons to church, to listen to Rev. Dr. FOWLER'S Jubilee Sermon.

## SERMON BY REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D.

*The Value of its Sunday School to the Church with which it is connected.*

A SERMON PREACHED OCTOBER 21, 1866, ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, UTICA.

## EXODUS II : 9.

"AND PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER SAID UNTO HER, TAKE THIS CHILD AWAY, AND NURSE IT FOR ME, AND I WILL GIVE THEE THY WAGES."

The Family, the Church and the State are divine organizations. The Lord not merely formed and introduced them through his Providence, but he ordained them by his Word and instituted them by his Agency.

They are not, however, the only legitimate organizations. They admit of tributaries and subordinates, for which we can plead no express divine command, and no direct divine interposition. Anything is valid that co-operates with them, and sometimes their accessories are so evolved by providential processes and so employed by the Spirit, that they have almost as manifestly a divine sanction, as if God explicitly appointed and immediately constructed them.

Is not this true of the Sunday School? Do not its origin and its career, its constitution and its objects, its workings and its results, indicate its virtual inauguration by God and its authorization by Him?

We shall follow out the inquiry in one line, if we consider *the Sunday School as the auxiliary of the Church*, and it will give more definiteness to the investigation, if we consider *the value of its own Sunday School to the particular church with which it is connected*.

The Lord commends youth to the care of his people, with the promise of a reward for faithfulness. He says to them,

"Take the children and nurse them for me, and I will pay you your wages." There is a large recompense for the service. Romanism appreciates it, and spares no pains to obtain it—Protestantism loses by failing to compete here with her rival and foe; and every congregation foregoes advantage in proportion to its neglect of the young.

None of us claim *the kind of authority for the Sunday School* that may be asserted for the Church. It is not a divine organization. No verbal precept of God decreed it, and no direct action of God founded it. But it is so urgently needed, it came so naturally into being, it has proved so full of life, it is so co-operative with the Church and so identical with its intent, its benefits have been so extensive and genuine, and its capabilities for good are so immense, that we can not doubt that God meant that it should be established, and that he wishes it to be employed.

*The relation of a Sunday School to the particular Church to which it belongs* is that of a *subsidiary*. It is not an associate, but a servant. Precisely how far the authority over it shall be exercised, is discretionary with the church under which it is placed.

In some cases it extends to details. The appointment of superintendent and teachers is made by the officers of a church, and they take the entire management of the school.

There is no objection to this, where the practice of it has accustomed and reconciled all parties to it, though caution should be observed lest the zeal and efficiency of the teachers be impaired by curtailing their prerogatives and responsibilities.

In other cases the actual exercise of authority is almost entirely foreborne by church officers. The teachers choose their own superintendents and appoint all who are engaged in the schools, and make the regulations and arrangements for them.

There is no objection to this, provided it be understood that the power of control lies in the churches, and is only

delegated to the teachers, and provided also that the churches be not permitted to presume that they are exempt from all interest in the schools and from all obligations to them.

It is wrong in schools to question the authority of churches over them, and it is wrong in churches to neglect schools.

Sometimes jealousies arise and collisions occur, churches suspect schools of insubordination, and schools suspect churches of interference. Organizations so essentially harmonious and co-operative ought never to admit of discord and strife, and when these exist, they can seldom be ascribed to misapprehensions alone. The seat and source of them must lie in blameworthy dispositions; schools are refractory, or churches are imperious. My reverend fathers and brethren will permit me to say that it almost always creates an impression unfavorable to themselves, when they complain of the attitude of their Sunday Schools, and charge them with encroachments. The probability is that they have kept aloof from them. When ministers are identified with their Sunday Schools, these prove their best allies.

*The object of Sunday Schools* is religious instruction and training, and particularly the inculcation of the Scriptures with a view to the conversion, the sanctification and the usefulness of the scholars. Their great aim is to expound and enforce revealed truth.

Next to the Ministry, its Sunday School is *the agency of most consequence to a church*. There can be no thrift without it, and usually the thrift of a church will tally with the attention bestowed on its Sunday School and with the success achieved in it.

Some may question this. They reason from the past. The churches of our fathers flourished, they argue, and yet they had no Sunday Schools.

But new circumstances demand new instrumentalities, and wisdom is shown in adapting instrumentalities to cir-

cumstances. Merchants got rich in olden times, and in methods that would bankrupt merchants in these times. The changes in trade may not be real improvements, but they better suit the present state of business.

And so it is with sacred pursuits. Different periods demand different expedients. The truths indispensable in one age enter the retired list in another, and especially do the impressive aspects of truth and the effective communications of truth rapidly change. Preachers who once spoke with resistless force seem to lose their power, but the waning is not in them. The public mind has ceased to be sensitive to the themes on which they dwelt, and to the presentation of them in which they dealt.

And notice the precise operation of Sunday Schools. Observe the exact work they perform for the churches to which they are attached.

Christians need means for protection and edification, and it is no small part of the mission of churches to take care of their members.

The methods in which their function shall be performed, are quite numerous and various, and bear, some more and others less directly, on strictly spiritual interests.

Churches are not organizations for social enjoyment, and yet, with a view to that for which they *are* formed, they must consult the social principle. This is innate and mighty. Human beings crave companionship. It is a necessity of their nature.

Now, though Christians are not congregated for social intercourse, the intention of their association is promoted by it. Personally interested in each other by friendly communion, they labor together the more cordially and vigorously in church work.

The stockholders and directors of banks, railroads and other business companies, may limit their interviews to the consideration and advancement of their pecuniary interests. They may scarcely recognize each other apart from this



sphere; they never meet, perhaps, in a family circle, or in general society; and they never converse, perhaps, except about the investment they hold. They have no care for each other, and no sympathy and concert with each other, except in reference to the concern in which their funds are combined. Money is the single and the sufficient bond to hold them together in their connection, and the adequate incentive to action.

But church members are congenial spirits. Their association is a fellowship. The attraction of affinity draws them together. They are brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus. They constitute a family, and something like domestic intercourse is imperative in their households.

In every congregation some sigh for society. They are strangers in the place perhaps, or their circumstances or dispositions have obstructed their forming acquaintanceships. They pine in solitude, or perhaps fret and complain. The isolation in which they live—the neglect they suffer, preys upon them, or angers them. Gradually they become weaned from the church, and at last hostile to it. It has wronged them, they think, and they owe it a grudge.

Scarcely any circumstance afflicts a pastor more. He learns the grief, or the indignation that is felt. It is told him in tears, it may be, or in wrath, and what can he do to compose the one or dry up the other?

The church probably is not worthy of blame, or its blameworthiness at most is that of inconsideration. It does not mean to shut out any of its members from social, more than from ecclesiastical communion; but through heedlessness, or the lack of opportunity to prevent it, it sometimes virtually does it.

All expedients that aim directly at the cure of the evil, invariably fail. The bringing of people together merely or primarily to promote intercourse between them, never succeeds. Church parlors soon cease to be church resorts, and church parties soon cease to be church gatherings. This is not the divine method for producing sociality in Christian congregations. Their members must meet under the

inspiration of benevolence. They must be with one accord in one place, as co-operators in doing good. Their communing together must take place during their working together.

Now, Sunday Schools are invaluable in the service they render here. *They serve as social institutions.* They furnish a theater for free intercourse between church members. Persons who might sit for years at the communion table, without scarcely recognizing each other, through them become familiar friends; and those who have recently joined a congregation, through them become acquainted in it. Not a few who, but for them, must have pined in solitude, and grieved life wastefully away, or embittered by apparent neglect destroyed much good, are happy in upbuilding a church and in general labors of love.

For safety's sake, and in order to their improvement, Christians *need exercise.* They are not gathered into societies, as arks, in which they shall be preserved; or as nurseries, in which they shall be tended, or as hospitals, in which they shall be healed. They are combined for co-operation. They come together to work together.

And there can be no departure from this design without serious harm. Satan employs idle hands, and to escape his service, the communicants of every church must be usefully occupied. The busy ones in Sunday Schools at least avoid being troublers in Israel. Restless spirits, fault finders, the jealous and suspicious, the breeders of ill-will, the stirrers up of strife, are they who say to the Master, "I go sir," but go not. They must do something, and they will be doing mischief if they are not doing good.

And what a field for *healthful* exercise the Sunday School presents. It is the gymnasium of the church. Action is the condition of vigor. Debility follows lethargy. The stirring Christian is the strong Christian. The torpid Christian is the feeble Christian.

Still more is exercise the condition of *growth*. Vegetation proceeds passively. The seed, the germ, the plant, submit to the forces applied to them, and thus swell and rise. Not so with sanctification. Its expansion and uplifting are a forth-putting. The Christian thrusts out his graces—and what facilities for this the Sunday School affords! How it develops the intellect and the heart, the faculties and the affections. The teacher is under tuition. His understanding is quickened and strengthened. His intelligence is enlarged. Above all, his benevolence is inflamed.

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.” “The end of the commandment, is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” In other words kindness is holiness. The sum of duty is an affectionate heart. As the great Teacher expresses it, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.”

Now what better practice can there be of obedience to the first of all the commandments, and of the second, which is like unto it, than that of Sunday School instruction. It is a labor of love. It aims to serve the scholars by teaching them to glorify their Father in heaven. Affection for God, and benevolence to man incite the service, and it stimulates them.

Pre-eminent is this benefit to *young Christians*. In former days but little part in beneficence was accorded to them. Their years, it was supposed, did not qualify them for it, and it did not befit their years. Only the mature appeared equal and adapted to it. But the Sunday School commissions especially the young, and gives full scope for their aspirings and powers, and how incalculable is the blessing to them. They are no longer harmless beings, at best, and less still frivolous beings, with whom levity is the only outflow of exuberant spirits. They have useful employment, and many who would have lived in listlessness, and so stupefied and enervated and dwarfed them-

selves, have accomplished untold good, and by the exertion acquired untold good.

*Female talent* is likewise exercised. The Saviour does not discriminate between the sexes in his requirements of usefulness. He lays the responsibility, and confers the privilege on both. Women are summoned to it as imperatively as men, and their achievement of it is as cordially accepted and applauded.

And occupation is essential to them as a safeguard and invigorator, and while characteristically compassionate and kind, they have peculiar aptitudes for teaching, and peculiar address with the young. Sunday Schools are the nurslings of women, loved by them with maternal tenderness, and watched over and ministered to by them with maternal devotion. It seems as if neither could live without the other. Sunday Schools certainly could not survive the withdrawal of women; and when we remember that benevolence is a female passion, and think of the many of the sex who are consuming away under it, because they have no access to objects on which to expend it, we wonder how women can dispense with Sunday Schools.

*Nourishment* is as necessary for Christians as exercise. They must be fed while they are used. Their aliment is truth, and the Scriptures are the storehouse in which it is laid up. We must grow in knowledge to grow in grace. Holiness is the consequent of intelligence—not invariably produced by it, but invariably dependent upon it. If it does not always come from it, it never comes without it. We must be students, to be saints.

Now necessity is laid upon Sunday School teachers to be learning, and to be learning from the Scriptures. These are their text-book, and they cannot use them without being familiar with them.

And they do search them. They find themselves studying them as was never their wont before they took scholars in them, and they get more from them, and understand

them more correctly. When they leave their classes, they close, or abate their Bible studies. The teaching members of a church are its well-informed members. They may be inferior to others in natural talents and in general education, but by the stress of their office, they have more of the knowledge that is unto godliness. A celebrated English clergyman has asserted, that with the whole educational apparatus of Europe before him, he hesitates not to say that the British Sunday Schools, sustained at a millionth part of its expense, infinitely exceeds it in value, and that all the nations of the Continent can not furnish a body of persons equal in number, knowledge, character, piety, and usefulness, to that of England's Sunday School Teachers.

And just here Sunday Schools come in as aids to the *pulpit*. The grief of a preacher is not so much from opposition to the truth, as from indifference to it. Indeed resistance to it is often an encouraging sign. It shews sensibility. The heart and conscience are manifestly alive. But inattention forbids hope. If hearers will not heed the truth it cannot bless them, and they are generally regardless of it. The preacher cannot get the ear of his congregation. While seated before him, they do not listen to him. They have not been interested in the theme. Nothing has directed them to it, and excited their thoughts about it.

Sunday School teachers study the subjects of sermons and discuss them, and when discoursed upon, they are sure to consider them. Our teachers' meetings frequently suggest my topics for the sacred desk, and the treatment of them, and I never doubt that every word is heard then.

And let it be observed in this connection, that while the minister is helped by the Sunday School as a preacher, it is his assistant as a *pastor*. "Feed my lambs," is the Saviour's injunction. The care of the young and inexperienced is chief among his responsibilities, and he can best discharge it, I have no hesitation in saying, through the co-operation of teachers. Indeed I know of no other mode

that can compare with this. What else can approach the demands of the case, and what else has ever so nearly met them. To what did the catechetical instruction of our fathers amount? It was valuable, we admit. Many have reason to be grateful for it and still profit from it, but compared with the Sunday School, how few it reached and how superficially it impressed those whom it did reach.

And after truth has been communicated to the young and inexperienced, and the Spirit of God applies it with convincing and converting power, what equally useful provision can be made for inquiring minds and recently regenerated souls? Teachers have the confidence of their scholars, and are interested in them, and they not only can, but they do tell them what they must do to be saved, and they not only can, but they do train them in their new life. For my brethren of the eldership, as well as for myself, I am happy to acknowledge our large indebtedness to the teachers of our Sunday Schools, in the care of "the flock of which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers." Many have been well taught and hopefully converted, and happily trained through their agency, whom we could not have hoped efficiently to serve.

And what a *nursery for the church* its Sunday School proves. Thence it is that no small portion of the plants of righteousness are taken that flourish in the garden of the Lord. Eighteen thousand scholars were reported as having been converted the last year in the Sunday Schools of our State, represented in the Convention recently held in this church, and these constitute but a portion of the schools in the State, and the reports from them were incomplete. Fifty thousand scholars were hopefully converted in the United States during the eight years preceding 1832, and the number of scholars at that time was comparatively small. Our church is principally replenished from its Sunday Schools, and without their Sunday Schools, the membership of most churches would decline.

Nothing should be encouraged that must impair parental

obligations. These are divinely constituted, and it would be impious to weaken them. Fathers and mothers owe duties to their sons and daughters which none else can discharge. They are bound to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They must care for their souls, and they cannot innocently demit the charge.

And yet multitudes of children will be sadly neglected if they are left to parental education alone. Many belong to every congregation for whom the church ought to be concerned,—and will they be taught and trained without a Sunday School?

And every Christian congregation is a *missionary association*. We are not permitted to keep within ourselves. We are connected quite as much with reference to our usefulness as to our improvement. Indeed our improvement depends on our usefulness. We can be blessed only so far as we are blessings. Every church must cast its light abroad. Every church must spread like leaven. The community about it must feel its happy influence, and it must join with sister churches in evangelizing the world.

Now disband our Sunday Schools and what would we accomplish outside of ourselves?

We owe a duty especially to the poor and ignorant and depraved of the community to which we belong. God will not allow us to neglect them. They will make victims of us, if we do not make beneficiaries of them. We are at their mercy if we do not show them mercy. Our property, our persons, every interest we prize will be depredated upon and assailed, if we do not protect them by reforming and Christianizing instrumentalities.

The age abounds in expedients for this, but the Sunday School surpasses them all. It acts as a preventive, which is better than a cure. It keeps the young from the vices to which they are exposed. Ninety-nine hundredths of crime are due to ignorance, Sabbath-breaking, and intemperance;—but Sabbath School scholars cannot grow up in

ignorance, and they are constantly cautioned against breaking the Sabbath, and falling into intemperance. Not a single pupil of ROBERT RAIKES was ever convicted of a flagrant offence, and his schools gathered in only the neglected and tempted and defenceless. Of five hundred convicts conversed with indiscriminately, only three had been Sunday School scholars. A Governor of Botany Bay, the well known receptacle of British criminals, once declared that in consequence of the establishment of Sunday Schools, only one of the children of the convicts had been found guilty of an offence during his administration.

To suppress vice, we must begin at the fountain. If we see to character where it first springs up, we save the life from being debauched.

And this is the true policy, whether we consult our ease or humanity. We spare ourselves labor, and our beneficiaries suffering. It costs us less to train the child than to reform the man, and it costs those we serve less to develop into virtue than to be extricated from vice.

But the benefit of Sunday Schools is not confined to the children of families outside of Christian congregations. They take it to their homes. The lessons are repeated to the households with which the scholars are connected. The Scripture verses learned, the expositions of Scripture passages received, the statements and illustrations of truth noticed, the songs sung echo in the ears of kindred and friends. "My first success," said Richard Baxter, "was among the young, and so it was when God touched the heart of the young with love and goodness, in various instances the friends, their fathers and their grandfathers, who had lived in ignorance before, became religious themselves, induced by love to their children, who appeared so much wiser and better and more dutiful than before. In a little time religion spread through many families, and after a few years there was scarcely a house in which the worship of God was not maintained."

Well do such facts justify the remark of ADAM SMITH, the distinguished political economist, when speaking of



Sunday Schools. "No plan has promised to effect a change of manners with equal ease and simplicity, since the days of the apostles."

DANIEL WEBSTER was once standing with THOMAS JEFFERSON on the portico of the latter, overlooking the Blue Ridge, when he asked him, "Mr. JEFFERSON, what is the hope of this country?" Pondering the question awhile, the venerable statesman replied: "Mr. WEBSTER, if this country is saved, it must be by training the children for Jesus Christ;" and then he added, "The Sabbath School will be one of the grand agencies for this salvation."

And is it not the true policy for us, and the dictate of philanthropy, to educate the community for virtue, rather than to deal with it for vice? As a distinguished editor has expressed it—"It is better, nay cheaper, to teach the child than to hang the man. It is wiser to remove temptation from the path of the weak, than to punish them because they fall; better to educate and throw inducements to morality around the vagrant, than to watch him as a rogue and punish him as a thief. It is more Godlike to lift up than to pull down:—safer to be sheltered by gratitude than to be walled in by batteries and hedged about by spears."

But though the first care of churches outside of themselves is the community about them, their field is the world. Nothing less than the habitable globe bounds their labors. Their aim coterminates with the view of their Great Head. They seek the redemption of the race.

For the execution of their design, they must furnish and procure and employ all the requisite means.

"How then shall men call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" A ministry must be raised up and deputed to all nations if they are ever to be converted.

Now, the Sunday School is the birth-place of ministers and missionaries. At least three-fourths of the pastors in our land, and a large portion of those who are now abroad preaching Christ and him crucified, attended Sunday Schools, and many of them were there primarily and principally committed to the sacred office.

A large portion of the devoted clergy and friends of religion in England under forty years of age, and nineteen-twentieths of those who went thence to the heathen, it was stated, a long time ago, were the alumni of these institutions.

The Rev. Dr. PHILLIP, the great evangelist of South Africa, said in a speech, that he commenced his labors in the cause of Christ, as a Sunday School teacher. The first prayer that he offered up in the presence of others, was in a Sunday School. The first attempt he made to speak from the Scriptures was in a Sunday School, and he was fully persuaded that but for these exercises, he should never have had the confidence to preach the gospel. During his Sunday School labors, twelve or fourteen of his associates entered the ministry, several of whom undertook the foreign work; among whom were MILNE and KEITH. The Rev. Mr. HANDS, of India, followed Dr. PHILLIP in a speech, and remarked that he, too, owed everything to the Sunday School, for there it was "the heavenly spark first caught his soul; there he first lifted up his voice to publish Christ; and but for the advantages there enjoyed, he would never have embarked for a heathen land." The Rev. Mr. MUNDY, also of India, said on the same occasion, that had he "never been a Sunday School teacher, he should never have been a missionary."

Nineteen out of twenty missionaries, at a meeting in London, were Sunday School wards. Said a British clergyman, "I knew a little town in the West of England, which has sent out three ministers, four missionaries, four wives of missionaries, and two home missionaries—the whole of them belonging to Sunday Schools. I know a town in York-

shire that has furnished seventeen or eighteen ministers and missionaries—two-thirds of them Sunday School scholars.”

The Sunday School in immediate connection with our Church, and whose Fiftieth Birthday we are now celebrating, has reared twenty-one ministers and fourteen missionaries; and, so far as they have been heard from, they refer to it, with one voice, as prominent among the agencies that determined their career. Says Mr. S. WELLS WILLIAMS, of China, one of our scholars and teachers, “The first desire I ever had to be a missionary, arose from a remark of my Sunday School teacher about the destitution of the heathen.”

Says Rev. Dr. E. D. MORRIS, of Columbus, Ohio, “I rejoice to say, that next to the influences of my Christian home, I sincerely place that School (ours) as first among the instrumentalities which finally led me to Christ and to his service in the ministry.”

Says Prof. JAMES D. DANA, of Yale College, “I was not led while in the School, I regret to say, to become a Christian; but the influences of the School remained with me, and later they were among the means which brought me to Christ and the knowledge of the joys of his love.”

The raising up and sending forth of ministers and missionaries are but preparatory to the formation and sustentation of churches. It is not enough to have the gospel proclaimed in communities where its institutions have not been established. Congregations must be gathered, and public religious ordinances must be maintained. Preachers alone are not competent for this, and they can not accomplish it with the help they may find on their new fields. Young churches must be the sucklings of the old, and very extensively are they generated and nursed through Sunday Schools. These are the seed from which they spring, and the conservatory in which they start. The process is as natural as it is common. The children are collected in a

neighborhood where religious services are seldom or irregularly held, classes are formed, teachers are selected, a library is procured; by and by adults come in, conversions take place, a prayer meeting is proposed, gradually stated worship is introduced, preaching is desired, a minister is invited, and, though not proposed at the outset, a church is finally organized. Just this course has gone on, and just this result has come out in the case of a large portion of the congregations formed in new settlements. Many of the best churches at the west commenced as Sunday Schools.

If the world is evangelized, *the Scriptures must be universally circulated*, and what a distributor of them the Sunday School is. Every scholar must own a copy of them, or have access to them; and what currency this gives to them. Says a Sunday School missionary, engaged in organizing schools in a southern State, "I want thousands of Testaments to put into the hands of as many thousand children, where there is no Bible Society, no stated preaching of the gospel, and an almost entire destitution of books." The American Sunday School Union sends out 75,000 or 100,000 Bibles and Testaments every year. The Sunday School Society of Ireland has issued, during the last fifty years, 454,153 Bibles, 890,125 Testaments, 238,965 portions of Scripture, and 1,707,393 Scripture Lessons—making a total of 3,290,434 volumes.

Most of you may be aware of the fact that Sunday Schools originated Bible Societies. It was the need of the sacred volume by some of them in Wales, that first suggested the thought of supplying copies of it in larger numbers, and at a smaller cost, and from this proceeded the British and Foreign Bible Society, which has issued more than 50,000,000 in 170 languages and dialects, of which 157 are translations effected by its agency, and which is the parent of the American Bible Society, that in fifty years has published nearly 22,000,000, in fifty different languages and dialects, and of other Bible Societies, which with these, have sent forth 87,000,000.

The circulation of the Scriptures is accompanied with helps and incitements to search them. When Sunday Schools were first formed, little more religious instruction was communicated than through creeds and catechisms, and when they were first transplanted in this country, the scholars merely committed Bible passages to memory. Gradually exposition was inaugurated, and now it is the main exercise. An admirable hermeneutic apparatus has been created and is constantly multiplying. There are Bible Dictionaries, Bible Geographies, Bible Histories, Bible Antiquities—a single Sunday School association, having on its catalogue forty or fifty works explanatory of the Bible, and at least 150 by master minds, devoted to Bible facts and doctrines.

*Its Sunday School is indeed of incalculable worth to every church. The guardianship it exercises, the spiritual vigor and development it promotes, the nourishment it supplies, the facilities for usefulness it affords, the attention to preaching it commands, the assistance in pastorship it renders, the help in church work it extends,—caring for children and youth,—addressing the outlying masses, educating ministers and missionaries, initiating churches, propagating and educating and applying the Scriptures—all this puts a value upon it which we can not express.*

And how much, especially, we owe our Sunday School. It was established half a century ago. Its founders were five young ladies. Two of them have ceased from their labors. One of them, it is our great pleasure to welcome to the festival that celebrates the institution whose first stones she helped to lay. The remaining survivors would have been glad to share and swell our joy, but one of the two is separated from us by the almost entire length of the land, and the other is kept at her beautiful home not far away, by delicate health. Our knowledge of the first deceased of the honored dead, comes to nearly all of us by report alone; and yet she seems familiar to us in the unfading bloom of a beautiful piety, with which she graced

gentle blood and social rank and personal endowments. Well did we know the second, and yet who would attempt to describe her. For forty years she taught with growing zeal and success in the school she was active in organizing. Brief intervals alone, covering altogether a very short space, interrupted her instructions. Crowded classes constantly hung upon her lips, and at least an hundred of her scholars savingly learned the truth. With abundant means to gratify worldly tastes, earnestly solicited to scenes of gaiety and fashion which she could have so highly embellished and enlivened, she chose usefulness as the field for her property, her talents and her culture. A more absorbed Christian—a more active and laborious servant of the Lord—a more devoted and competent teacher, I never knew and never expect to meet. I loved and admired her, and when death removed her at once from the School, the Church and the world, I felt bereaved indeed as a minister, but still more as a man.

The school was the offspring of a revival of religion. Its embryo was the suggestion of a friend from Troy, where God's spirit had then been recently poured out, and this suggestion was made to young converts, who were a portion of a then late and large turning unto the Lord. The fervor of a first love for the Saviour,—the spirit of a general refreshing from the divine presence, was the breath of life with which the school was quickened into being.

The infant institution received little nurture from those who might have been looked to as its foster parents. Minister and elders and church members, gazed at it askant. They doubted its kinship, and could not give it a place in the family. But true to their sex, the five clung to the bantling, and how abundantly their instinct has been vindicated, and how largely their courage and persistency have been rewarded. What a company of elect ones soon gathered about them, and what a succession has followed them. How like ointment poured forth are the memories among us, of ALIDA VAN RENSSELAER, CATHARINE W. BREESE, ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD, SARAH MALCOLM, and MARY E.

WALKER, and what a perfume clings to such names as WILLIAMS, WILSON, VERNON, NOYES, BAGG, CLARKE, PARMELE, POND, MAYNARD, and others easily recalled.

And what blessings these and their associates and successors have been to the thousands who have sat at their feet! They have gone to the ends of the earth, bearing with them what was imparted to them and scattering it about them. Missionaries write to us that their most sacred and precious associations cluster about our Sunday School, and that it is the perennial fountain of good and of enjoyment to them. We travel to the East and West, to the North and the South, and everywhere meet old scholars whose fondest theme is our Sunday School, and who, full of gratitude for what it was and is to them,\* describe the schools modeled after it, which their hands have reared. It is hard not to take pride in it, though we deserve nothing of the credit for it, and if I become a fool in glorying over it, may I not say of the occasion, you "have compelled me." The scholars taught in it may be partial in their estimates of it, but it flatters us to hear them say after leaving it, that they find none like it,—and though I feel a blush kindling on my cheeks for repeating it, I must quote the remark to me and to several in other places, made by a distinguished friend of Sunday Schools, who has wide opportunities for observation at home and abroad, that it "is the best Sunday School within his knowledge, in Europe or America." We do not claim thus much, of course, nor even admit it, but is it not a pardonable weakness to be gratified by another's thought of it?

But excellent as it is, our Sunday School is by no means perfect. In common with the institution at large, it is in a course of progress. For fifty years it has been advancing, and onward, still onward it must go. Other Schools are in

\* Says T. P. HANDY, "My Sunday School life and my business life were each shaped in Utica, and if I have accomplished anything during these forty years as Superintendent and teacher, I owe it, under God, to the impression made on my mind by these noble teachers."

the tide, and if we stop we must drop behind. The vessel and the rigging and the sailing must improve to keep up with the prevailing rate of speed, and while provision is made for increasing swiftness, enlarged capacity must be secured. The size and equipments of Sunday Schools have wonderfully increased not only within fifty, but within ten, and even five years. The superb craft of a decade, or half a decade ago, would be condemned as an old hulk now. We have entirely outgrown our accommodations. The youngest children have always been collected in the chapel, without the possibility of being massed, on desirable occasions, with the rest of the School, and several of our largest classes are scattered over the gallery of the church. We need a room, with suitable divisions, that will admit of all the scholars forming in general exercises, a single audience, and why shall we not make this the monument of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the School, and a memorial of God's goodness and grace, so signally manifested through half a century. Ten thousand dollars would complete the building, and are there not some here who will so start the scheme by liberal offerings, and so address themselves to its prosecution, that the joy of our semi-centennial shall take permanent form, and have a perpetual expression? The prosperity of the School, so remarkable in the past, calls for the extended accommodation. The interests of the Church, so bound up with those of the School, and dependent upon it, plead that it may be granted. Gratitude to the School for the blessings it has conferred on successive generations of teachers and scholars, and through them distributed over the land and the world, claims such a return:—and how happy we would feel in the testimonial, as a recognition of what the school has hitherto performed, and as the indication of what it was expected hereafter to perform. The voices of the scattered living seem to mingle with the voices of the sainted dead, and swollen by the voice of God's Spirit and Providence, call on us to arise and build. Such a School, with such a history, ought not



long to beg for the means of an advancing and ascending career.

With the enlarged room, would come other and inexpensive requisites to extending usefulness,—such as a much better replenished library, and a full apparatus for Biblical study, appropriate to teachers' meetings, and to preparation for instructing classes.

More than money, and books, and space, the School needs the lively sympathy of the Church,—the unequivocal and habitual manifestations of interest in it,—active co-operation with it by the congregation at large, as opportunity permits, and especially by parents in promoting the regular and prompt attendance, and the studiousness of children,—and above all, that fervent, effectual prayer, which availeth much.

The intimacy of our association, and our familiarity with each other, permit me to say, dear teachers, that highly as you know I regard you, and profoundly sensible as I am of my indebtedness, and that of the Church and of the community to you, you need larger resources from which to draw your instructions,—more diligent study of your lessons, from week to week,—more spirituality of mind,—more communion with God,—more anxiety for the conversion and sanctification and usefulness of your scholars,—more wrestling in prayer. Our School must be the birth-place and nursery of souls.

The visit to us of so many of the former teachers and scholars, has affected and delighted and inspirited us more than we could trust ourselves to say. Tears and smiles have struggled for the mastery in bidding them welcome, or mingled in the memories they brought up. They are the friends of our early years,—or the friends of our dearest kindred,—or the friends of our honored dead. We have well known them, if we have never seen them, and

knowing them well, we love them. As members of our School, a tender tie unites us, and a quick vibration passes between us, and as we have listened to them, and talked with them, they have seemed to come back here, as from a better sphere. Did I dare so much to try shrinking modesty, I would like particularly to speak of our gratitude and pleasure in greeting one of the never-to-be-forgotten five, whose maiden hands laid the foundations of the School, and who, if idolatry were our religion, would be the gods we worshiped.

Rejoiced and dissolved by their coming back to the School, at its half-century Anniversary, the testimony they have thus borne to it,—the affection they have expressed for it, shall inspire us with new zeal for it, and devote us with undying earnestness to it. With all our hearts we pray, God bless the surviving founders of our dear Sunday School, and its former teachers and scholars, and when the record of its next fiftieth Anniversary shall be made up, may it recite the carrying on of the institution in the spirit with which they started and promoted it.

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The allusion in the Sermon to the straightened quarters at present occupied by the School, struck a cord in the hearts of many present; and during the singing of the closing hymn, word was communicated to the Pastor of a strong desire on the part of some present, that a collection for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for enlarging the Chapel and Sunday School building as a memorial of this delightful jubilee occasion, should then and there be taken up; the gentleman making the request, pledging himself for one-tenth of the amount required.

Dr. FOWLER requested the congregation to be seated, and after mentioning the above circumstance, said that he felt obliged to give his consent, notwithstanding the great reluctance he always felt to call upon his people for contributions.

A collection was then taken up, amounting to upwards of \$4,500, showing the golden fruits from the seeds sown during the past fifty years! And it gives us great pleasure to add, in this connection, that at present writing, the land on which to erect the addition has been bought and paid for, the plans are drawn, and in less than one year from the date of the Ffthieth Anniversary, we hope to be meeting in the new and enlarged quarters, which will be a constant memorial of our jubilee and the kind liberality of the School; thus adding another to the many land-marks, and an era in the progress of development for good in this dear old Sunday School.

At the close of the morning service the following hymn was sung.

The Zion of our fathers stood  
On yonder rock-browed height;  
There, nearer heaven they worshipped God,—  
Nearer the Light, sought Light.

Far round, its glow the altar spread,—  
Airs drank the incense sweet;  
The ladder on which Angels tread,  
Rose upward from this seat.

Yet none but strong hearts,—hearts of flame,  
Toiled up the ascent slow;  
And Zion's glory downward came,  
To dwell with men below.

Then prayed the builders,—Holy Dove!  
A nobler temple rear!  
And lo! the quickened heart of love,  
This Gate-way opened here.

Come in! they cried: spread out the page,  
Throw wide the entering door;  
Bring lisping childhood, trembling age,  
The untaught, and the poor.

They come:—the sweet rehearsals rise,  
And Angels listening say:—  
No glory has the Past that vies  
With thine, O Latter Day.

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

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In the afternoon the Anniversary exercises of the School were held in the church, which was filled with the scholars, their parents, and friends. After the opening exercises, the Report of the Secretary, Mr. GEORGE L. CURRAN, was read, from which we make the following extracts :

### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SABBATH SCHOOL.

During the past year the School has been in a flourishing condition, and has been prospered in its various interests. Its friends and supporters have been faithful and devoted, the scholars attentive and orderly, while the favors of God have been unceasing.

The attendance has been good—the daily average being 240 scholars and 31 teachers.

The money contributed during the year amounts to \$168. A part of this sum has been given to the freedmen, a part has been spent for the general interest of the School, and the balance remains in the treasury, no provision having yet been made for its expenditure.

Our library is now large and well supplied with good books. The system of distributing the books, recently adopted, has proved itself a successful one, and by the judicious and careful management of our Librarian and his able assistants, hardly a book has been lost during the year.

Two of our teachers, Miss HUBBARD and Miss PARSONS, left us in the winter to become teachers in the freedmen's schools in Washington and Alexandria. They write that they are well pleased with their work, and gratified by the success attending their labors.

Though so little has occurred to vary the ordinary routine of Sunday School labor and duties, on the other hand we have experienced many changes of a spiritual nature,

During the whole winter, a deep, religious feeling pervaded the School. There was no excitement; nothing of a transient nature about it, but earnestness, reflection, and a calm determination to seek the Saviour were its characteristics. Old and young were alike affected by it. The heedless became thoughtful—the careless, attentive. Our duties to God occupied the foremost place in our minds. Many, thus awakened, were by the influence of God's Holy Spirit led to forsake their evil ways. How many were converted we are unable to say, as most of the teachers have failed to furnish any statistics. Mr. LYLE reports eight of his class as having joined the church. Mr. TIMMS reports two in his class.

After which, addresses were delivered by Messrs. P. HARWOOD VERNON, SAMUEL E. WARNER, J. F. SEYMOUR, and HOVEY K. CLARKE.

The singing by the children did great credit to themselves and their excellent leader, Mr. HENRY H. HURD.

ABSTRACT OF THE ADDRESS OF P. HARWOOD VERNON.

It is twenty years this month, my young friends, since I removed from Utica, but—need I tell you—I still love this city and this Sunday School. When the old church was burned, my father—whose name I saw last evening with no little emotion upon the roll of your honored dead—brought me a piece of the bell, and I have kept it ever since as a sacred relic.

But there is another city which I also love—a city that for many years has been my home; and I will tell you one reason why I love it.

*“Here, a child, I sinned and strayed,  
Here my Saviour disobeyed;  
There I felt his chastening rod,  
There, I trust, returned to God.”*

Yet I must confess that the lessons taught me in this Sunday School have had not a little to do with forming my

character and shaping my life, and I trust that I am truly grateful for those lessons.

This morning, your pastor preached to us grown people a sermon to which we all listened with profit and delight, and which, I doubt not, we shall always remember; and now, although not a minister, I am going to preach a short sermon to you from a very little text, and should you forget every thing else that I may say, I wish you to remember this text. It has only four letters: W-O-R-K. WORK.

Perhaps you think that this is a strange subject for me to choose for such a time and place. This Church and Sunday School are known all over the State, and far beyond its borders, as a *working* Church and School; and I have often read with pride and joy of what you were doing for the Master; but that is the very reason why I have taken this text. It is because the past is so glorious and so safe that I am going to urge you to press on in the good path, and make the future, which is *yours*, even more glorious than the past.

There are four letters in the text, and I shall have four points in my sermon: W, stands for the *Way* of working for Christ; O, for *Objections* to working; R, for the *Reasons* for working; and K, for the *Kind* of work.

I shall have time only to consider very briefly two or three of these points.

The speaker then mentioned, as some of the many ways in which children can work for Christ—leading other children to the Sunday School, giving something they have learned or made or desired themselves for the spread of the gospel, and living a holy and exemplary life; and as some of the reasons for working—the certain reward, the command of God, and gratitude and love to Jesus. He endeavored to impress the truth by frequent illustrations, and in closing, urged the children to keep in mind the familiar lines:

“Never be afraid to work for Jesus,  
In his vineyard day by day:  
Labor with a kind and willing spirit;  
He will all your toil repay.”

## ADDRESS OF SAMUEL E. WARNER.

- Children! This part of these memorable exercises belongs to us. We are all children here to-day, come back to take our places in the old school. I recollect that in the Infant Class there used to be an elevated gallery, and that the little children of different ages used to sit upon the different forms, the youngest on the lowest; and so to-day, we are all here, members of the same school, but the day belongs to you who are on the lowest form.

We have come back to celebrate the Jubilee of our good old mother,—to rejoice with her on this happy occasion,—to lay our grateful tributes of affection and thankfulness upon the altar; for there is not one of those who are permitted to join in this celebration, whose heart does not swell with fervent gratitude that this Sunday School was established fifty years ago, and that he, in his day, was permitted to be connected with it.

We are most happy to meet with you at this time. There is but one thing, that, had I the power, I could wish changed. I have been almost tempted to wish that some of the old genii, of whom we used to read in the Fairy Tales, were under my control, so that I could again cause to rise from its ashes that dear old church where we used to meet, and the much-loved room where our Sunday School was held. This is a beautiful house in which we meet to-day, and it is very dear, and justly so to you. But to many of us, it is not so full of precious associations, as that noble old building with its towering spire, its resounding bell, its spacious audience room, lofty and majestic in its Ionic simplicity,—far more impressive, as it seems to us now, than the temples of more gorgeous and elaborate architecture, with their fretted vaults, and long-drawn aisles, and dim, religious light.

And then that familiar Sunday School room! As I think of it now, I am convinced that its contriver must have been far ahead of his age; for in many of the wealthy churches of our cities, the accommodations for the Sunday

School will not compare with those in that old room. How vividly does it now rise up before us, with its square seats and the desk in the middle, around which the attentive classes clustered, eager to listen to the instructions of their faithful teachers—each class detached from its neighbors, but all presenting the most animating spectacle of busy activity on which the eye can rest—an interested and intelligent company of children and youth, intent on studying the Word of God.

Could we again to-day meet in that noble old building, the sad news of whose destruction by fire brought tears to many eyes, as at the loss of a dear friend, it seems to me that this occasion would be complete. But though that is beyond our power, thank God that memory is left to us, and by that, and the wonderful power of association, we can rebuild the prostrate walls, and fill them again with vivid realities.

How busily is memory at work to-day, and how have we been living over again the scenes in which we were so happily engaged here in our youth. A profound thinker of our times, whose works are attracting great attention in England and this country, says that it is impossible to recall impressions. But it seems to me that my experience in regard to this School disproves that assertion. The most constant and the most vivid associations of my boyhood cluster around this Sunday School, and the earliest of my memories date back to it. I can truly say that not a week, I might almost say not a day, passes, that some thought or fact does not bring up before me fresh and life-like associations, and memories connected with that happy School. Again am I walking up the path on the side of the church that led to the school room; or standing by the library with its red case and glazed doors; or seated in the old familiar seat, listening to the instructions of my faithful teacher. Those impressions, stamped deeply and permanently into the very fibre of my being, can never be eradicated while thought and being last.

In recalling them at this hour, I scarcely know where to



begin, so numerous and pleasantly do they come thronging before me. Well do I recollect those Saturday afternoons when my sainted mother was so careful to see that my preparation for the next morning was complete, for never could I go out to play until I had perfectly committed to memory the fifteen verses which were our regular lesson. And then those Sabbath mornings which now seem always to have been bright and beautiful, as I took my cheerful walk to the much-loved School;—that school-room with the very spot against the wall where our seat was located;—that Superintendent, Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, with his winning smile, and bright and cheery voice, whom we then regarded with an attachment but little short of idolatry, but who now, with our larger experience, seems to our minds the very *beau ideal* of a Sunday School Superintendent, and whom we deliberately pronounce to have been unsurpassed by any Superintendent who has ever occupied that important and responsible position;—my Teacher, Mr. ALFRED HUNT, so constant and faithful;—and my classmates, all now scattered, some in the ministry, and in honored positions in professional life, one a General in the war, others in various active duties, while some have “crossed the river,” and have gone before us to that other world.

It was while a member of that class that I received my first impressions of a sudden and violent death. Well do I recollect that Saturday noon, when I took my last look of one who sat in the same seat with me at the day school we attended, and who was also a member of our Sabbath School class. We parted with the plan of meeting again that evening, but before sundown, the sad tidings spread through the city that HARRISON DANA was drowned. While bathing in the river, the summons came for him, and he was called away. The next afternoon at the close of Sunday School, our class went down to his father’s house in Broad street, and looked upon the cold and lifeless remains of one, who, but a few hours before, was as bright, and happy, and hopeful of long life as any of us.

My mind goes back to those afternoon sessions, for in

those days two sessions a day were not considered too much for the Sunday School. How well do I recollect our pleasure when Mr. PARMELE conducted those exercises, with his happy and remarkable talent for interesting the children in the most serious and sacred subjects, sparkling with bright thoughts, full of appropriate illustrations, and withal so pointed and personal that we could not escape the application of truth to our own hearts and consciences. Religion with Mr. PARMELE was a cheerful matter, nothing constrained or put on, but winning, attractive and beautiful. Those Sabbath afternoons were always a treat to us.

Nor were they the only treats we had. I do not know whether picnics were in vogue in those days, but I have very fragrant recollections of a gathering in the old warehouse, corner of Washington street and the Canal. I can not tell you who were the speakers, or what were the exercises. I only recollect that the raisins and oranges were very sweet, and that we had a "good time."

And then, too, I recollect a Fourth of July, when we marched in procession to Cooper's Orchard, and spent a happy time in celebrating the day in connection with other schools of the city. That day was a marked and memorable era in our Sunday School life, memorable for the introduction of an innovation that was most welcome and agreeable to our youthful hearts.

We had always been in the habit of singing from the "Union Hymns"—the sober, sedate and excellent "Union Hymns." Fortunately for us, that eminent composer, to whom the church is so greatly indebted for so many improvements in the delightful service of praise, THOMAS HASTINGS, Esq., then our fellow townsman, was issuing from the press of Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, those little yellow-covered numbers of the "Spiritual Songs;" and in one of these, the Committee of Arrangements had discovered a new and stirring piece, which, as a particular favor, we were permitted to sing on that *secular* occasion. Well do I recollect the glee and enthusiasm with which we rolled out the stirring notes of that inspiring tune, "Now be the Gospel

Banner," which it is not very strange that we preferred even to good old Peterborough, Dundee and Mear, which had for so long been our standbys, varied and enlivened, sometimes, greatly to our delight, by the more cheerful and animated strains of Coronation and Harborough, with its four-fold refrain of "Crown him Lord of all." Very different is your lot, children, from ours—you who are surfeited with *new books* of beautiful and inspiring tunes prepared expressly for you, whose sweet strains as you have sung them for us, charm and delight our ears.

I said I scarcely knew where to begin, but I find it still more difficult to stop, such a throng of associations comes pressing upon me, when I attempt to recall my life in this dear old school. But I must not dwell longer upon them, bright and inviting as they seem to me, and fragrant with most precious memories and sacred influences. The impressions made in this School were deep and abiding, and have been the actuating principle of future effort and endeavor. Never while mind and heart can be employed in labors for Christ and his cause, will the influence of the instructions, and the blessed privileges of this School, cease to exert its living energy through us, vitalized by the power of the Divine Spirit.

And what is true of us, is no less true of the hundreds and thousands who have shared in, and been blessed by the sacred influences of this School. As they have gone out from its instructions, they have carried with them into the professions, and the active duties of life, the results of the earnest prayers and faithful efforts of their pious teachers who have sought to train them in the way of life. The choicest seed of divine truth has here been faithfully sown in young and tender hearts, and often bedewed with the showers of Divine grace, so that it is not strange that the fruitage has been rich and glorious.

It would be hard to trace all the threads of influence that have proceeded from this School, for they are thickly interwoven into the web of the history of Christian effort for the last fifty years. To our human vision as we look upon

it, it seems intricate and involved, and it would be a hopeless task to extricate each thread from the completed fabric. But there is an eye that has watched each tiny thread as it has passed into the loom of Time, and has seen it mingling with its fellows from so many sources, but has kept it distinct in view, tracing it with unerring certainty through all its shifting changes, noting all its relations to the diversified plan, and registering the whole course of its progress without a single omission or mistake. That registry will one day be read before the assembled world, and then, and not till then, can it be fully known what has been accomplished for Christ and his glory through these fifty years, by the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church of Utica.

Children! The past is secured,—the future rests with you, and those who are to come after you. It is a glorious privilege that you enjoy to be members of a School with such a history as has this. And just as in the army, the veteran soldiers were proud to belong to a regiment or a division that had won a glorious name,—that had never suffered defeat, and whose standard had never gone down in disgrace; so let it be to you a cause of thankfulness that you belong to a band, that, in the struggle of light with darkness, and truth with error, has fought so faithfully and valiantly during half a century, for the great Captain of our salvation.

That struggle you are now to continue to wage. We commit the standard to your watch and ward. When the enemy comes in like a flood, plant the blood-stained standard of your Commander in the forefront, and rally to its defense. Never let its fair folds be sullied by defection or disgrace. Defend it earnestly with all the power of souls inspired by love for Christ and his glorious cause. Take "the shield of faith," "the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Clad with this heavenly panoply, you will be prepared to fight manfully the fight of faith. Thus during these coming years will you continually be gaining trophies for king Jesus, your glorious Leader; so that when another fifty

years shall have rolled around, those who meet to celebrate the Centenary of this School, shall be able to recount far greater triumphs of grace and glory.

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ADDRESS OF HOVEY K. CLARKE.

I had no expectation when I came here, this afternoon, that I should be invited to address you; nor should I have dared to consent to do it, could I have anticipated that I should rise just as you had listened to the beautiful and affecting tribute from your pastor to my mother, which scarce leaves me power to command my utterance. I came here to witness what I thought would be one of the most interesting spectacles of this interesting occasion. I desired to see the School together—the same School where I was once a scholar, as you have just been told, though that was a very, very long time ago; for I suppose I am now the oldest scholar here attending these semi-centennial exercises. I would like very much, if there were time, to continue the pleasant reminiscences which were begun last evening, and have been continued here this afternoon. I would like especially to tell you what we used to do, and how we used to do it, when I was a scholar here more than forty years ago. I would like to tell you of the hymns we used to sing. There were no children's hymn books then; no such beautiful music as you have sung this afternoon. The hymns we sung were taken from the same book that was used in church.

“How shall the young secure their hearts,  
And guard their lives from sin?”

one of the versions of the 119th Psalm, was one of them.

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,”

was another. Tallis' Evening Hymn, Dismission, and

“See the kind Shepherd, Jesus, stands  
With all engaging charms,  
Hark! how he calls the tender lambs,  
And folds them in his arms.”

These were almost all we had. The last one was sung during public worship here this morning, though I observed a change in the first line. Your book has it,

"See Israel's gentle Shepherd stands."

I cannot but think our way was the best,

"See the kind Shepherd, *Jesus*, stands,"

for that retains the blessed name of Jesus. When that hymn was read this morning, I listened for the first notes of the organ, to hear whether it would be sung to the same tune we used to sing in the Sabbath School. But it was not; and though the last verse of the hymn, that one which gives assurance that God will not forget the orphan children of those who put their trust in him, was sung with such tenderness and beauty as almost to overcome me, I could not quite forgive the choir that they did not sing it to the good old tune of "Clarendon," as we used to sing it ever so long ago.

But, my dear children, pleasant as it would be to me to think over and talk over the days when I was a scholar here as you are now, I would rather help you, if I can, to realize what a blessed place the Sabbath School is to guide you right in life. Why, children, don't you know that there is nothing so important, when any great or good thing is to be done, as to start right? And, if you start right in the great journey of life, you have good reason to hope that you will keep right. Now, that is the reason why we think so much of the Sunday School. Here is the place, of all others, for starting in life just right; for if you start only a little wrong, ever so little at the beginning, and keep on, you will be going further and further from the right way as you go on in life. A very little turning from that way now may make a great difference when you are as old as I am.

I read some years ago in a newspaper, how very near one of the ocean steamers came to a dreadful accident by a

little, a very little wrong, at the start. Fortunately, the danger was discovered in time, or it would have resulted in an appalling calamity. You know, I dare say, some of you, that there is a line of steamers between New York and Liverpool, called the Cunarders. After leaving New York, they usually stop a few hours at Halifax on their way, and then they lay their course in a straight line toward the north-east, so as to pass Cape Race, and then they turn again and take a straight course for their port of destination on the other side of the Atlantic. But this *straight course*! Do you know how they keep a vessel straight on its way through the fogs in the day time, and the darkness of the night, with nothing in sight on any side but the rolling waves of the ocean? They steer by the compass. In a box called the binnacle, which is right before the man at the wheel, so that he can see it all the time, the compass hangs. In the binnacle is a light at night, which shines directly on the compass, so that whether in day time or at night, though they can see nothing else, so long as they can see the compass, on they go through storms and darkness, with entire confidence that the compass is leading them right. What could they do without a compass?

Now the steamer that I am telling you about, left New York as usual, made its usual stop at Halifax, and then started out for its voyage across the ocean, laying its course east-north-east, I think it was, so as to leave the projecting head lands to their left hand. On they went, all day and nearly all one night; the man at the wheel, with his hand firmly grasping its spokes, and his eye on the compass—the officer on duty, as he paces up and down the deck, occasionally looking at the compass to see that all was right. On they go, with no fear of danger, the route they have traveled so many times before, when suddenly, right before them, some awfully monstrous obstacle seems in their path. What is it! Is it a fog? No, it is too solid for that. Is it an iceberg? No, it is too large, too immovable for that. What can it be! They cannot tell. They only know that in a moment more they will be dashing on it, unless the

course of the vessel can be changed. "Port! Port! Hard a port," shouts the officer of the deck. They spring to the wheel and bear down with all their might upon it. Slowly the vessel begins to swing, the bow turns more and more, and passes on outside the rocks in safety. What an escape! In a minute more, but for the timely discovery of their danger, that splendid vessel would have been dashing on the rocks, and probably every soul on board would have perished in the waters.

But how happened it that they were led into such danger? Did not they read the compass right? Yes. Was the compass itself wrong? Ah! that *was* the trouble. During the stop at Halifax, some repairs were needed to the binnacle, and instead of putting in a brass bolt, which had to be replaced, the man who did the work, *put in an iron one*. He did not know, or did not think, that the iron he put in so near the needle of the compass, would so divert the pointing of the needle as to lead them wrong, who followed it. It was not much, it is true. Just a little, only a very little; but that little at the start from Halifax became, as they went on, further and further from the true course, the course they supposed all the while they were sailing; so that instead of heading out toward the ocean, they were, before the next morning, heading miles in toward the shore. And all this danger happened from just that little start in the wrong direction. Don't you see, children, how important it was for that vessel to start just right? And now, when you are starting out on the unspeakably important voyage of life—a voyage that may bring you to the blessedness of the redeemed, or overwhelm you with the sorrows of the lost; do you wonder that we should be anxious that you should start right, and keep right?

Ah! but how can I? you may ask. Where is the compass that will guide us that never goes wrong; that will always, in all dangers, lead us right? Here it is, in this blessed Book, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." A light! That is what it is. A light to lead you safely through all the darkness and dangers that



beset your pathway here, and this you have in the Sabbath School.

Do you think you know how blessed a thing the light is? Did you ever try to think what this world would be if there were no light in it; what it would shortly become if the light were withdrawn from it? Suppose while you are sitting here now, that darkness should begin to come down upon us, until not one of you could see another. The sexton would come, I suppose, to light the gas. But suppose it would not light; that no matches, nor candles, nor lanterns could be lighted. Then, I think, we should begin to be alarmed. You would try to go home. But while the darkness had been coming on us here, so it had every where. In all your houses, in all the world, there was darkness, pitchy, dreadful darkness every where. What do you think would become of you? You could not go home. You could not find the way. Fathers and mothers would be looking and calling for their children—the streets would be full of people every where running against and over each other—the wildest scene of confusion and distress would every where prevail. But it is impossible to paint the dreadful picture. I will not try. It is too horrible to think of. Dreadful as such a picture is, it is just what this world would be, if the light were withdrawn from it; and this horrible condition falls far short of showing what the full power of sin in the world would be, if all the light which shines from the Word of God were withdrawn from it.

Now, suppose again that you had suffered such a darkness as this for a few days, or a few hours even. Don't you think you would be glad to see the light again? How you would rejoice at the first glimmer of it; and as it grew brighter and brighter, how you would hail your deliverance from the dreadful calamity. But the sin that is in the world is a much greater calamity than any such darkness as I have tried to describe. From that there is but one way of escape, and that is the way which is pointed out here. That is what it means when it says, "Thy Word is

a light unto my path;" and here, in the Sabbath School, is the place to learn about it. I wish I could make you understand, as I think I do, and feel as I do, how great is the privilege you here enjoy. What an inestimable blessing it is to enjoy in childhood faithful religious instruction! I thank God for the teachings which I enjoyed here in my childhood; and I am glad that, after this long lapse of years, I can tell you so. The association of my childhood with this school, its superintendents and teachers, excite the deepest emotions of gratitude to God and to them. How can I be insensible to the recognition here of the labors of one who, next to Him who died that sinners might be saved, I owe more than to all the world beside. I can not be too grateful that there is here such a blessed memory of one so dear to me. To be the son of one so remembered and so beloved, is to me a joy unspeakable.

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth  
From loins enthroned, from rulers of the earth,  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,  
The son of parents passed into the skies."

Precious is the heritage of the skies! And that, dear children, if you will but heed the teachings you here receive, may be the joy of every one of you.

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#### ABSTRACT OF JOHN F. SEYMOUR'S REMARKS.

In order to interest the children, and give them some impression of the extended usefulness of the School, Mr. SEYMOUR took them with him on an imaginary journey to China, to see one of its scholars and missionaries, S. WELLS WILLIAMS, and thence to Syria, to see another scholar and missionary, W. FREDERIC WILLIAMS, and thence to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Columbus, St. Louis, New Orleans, Milwaukee, Detroit, Buffalo, Geneva, Willowbrook, and other places, where the graduates of the School are to be found.

He called the attention of the teachers particularly to the letters of Mr. FREDERIC S. WINSTON, and Mr. JAMES M. HOYT. Mr. WINSTON is now at the head of one of the largest institutions in this State, holding a trust of \$17,000,000, and the welfare of thousands of people, upon whose lives that institution has made insurance.

How comes it that so great a confidence is reposed in him? Can it be traced to the influence of Sunday Schools upon teachers? Mr. WINSTON tells us that in 1823, when he was only 17 years of age, and a clerk in a store in Utica, Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, the father of your present Superintendent, led Mr. WINSTON to your School, then on Catharine street, and gave him a class of children to teach, and he adds, after 43 years of experience, these important words: "That I have been able to endure the unremitting pressure of mental and physical labor without relaxation, which has fallen to my lot for so many years, has been a matter of surprise to those who do not know by experience, how heart and brain are refreshed and renovated in passing from earthly pursuits to higher and sacred aims and efforts on the Sabbath."

Do any of you ever grow weary of your work, or incline to the thought that it is too great a tax upon you,—call to your minds this letter, in which Mr. WINSTON says: "Let no man in health excuse himself from the duty of teaching on the Sabbath, because he needs mental rest. If he has a heart for the work, and a real sympathy for the persons for whom he is working, the labor will be rest; he will need no other."

Are you discouraged by your inability to still the restless hands and feet of your little scholars, or do you imagine that your words are lost upon their hearts, because their bright eyes seem ever looking after play or mischief? They are not more restless or play-loving than were his scholars, whose names he gives you, and who, as he well says, are honored wherever known.

These children hear every word you utter, and criticise it too. They will never forget you, and they will particularly

treasure up every word or look of affection you bestow upon them.

If you think me too sanguine—read the testimony of one of his scholars, JAMES M. HOYT, Esq. He says: “I remember on one Sabbath morning, in his class, in the old Lancasterian building on Catharine street, long since displaced, the tender and loving influence of Mr. WINSTON melted me to tears for my sins, and led me, I have thought then, perhaps, first of all, to Jesus as my Saviour.”

My own teacher was Mr. MILTON BRAYTON; the kindness of his manner, is as fresh in my memory, as if his teaching was but of yesterday.

This same benevolence and sympathy was to me the great power and charm of TRUMAN PARMELE, and I may add that without it, no teacher can be successful. Thus, too, that earnest old soldier, Captain CHARLES STUART, won our hearts in spite of his stern discipline.

The “irradiate gaze” with which he seemed when in prayer “to behold the mercy seat,” as mentioned by Mr. SEWARD in his address last evening, was a fact, not a fancy: we all took notice of it. And not many years ago, when he was praying at the house of Mr. ARTHUR TAPPAN, one of the servants observed his countenance, and afterwards told her mistress that his face was like an angel’s looking up into heaven.

This Sunday School teaching must be an affair of the heart. Children penetrate through all disguises until they get at our inmost spirit. If we do not love them, they will know it. They care more for that than for intellect. Examine the letters sent to you, and you will almost invariably find that every scholar mentions, first of all, the affection of his or her teacher.

I cannot close my remarks without alluding to the sainted women who did so much—perhaps more than all others—for this School. Mrs. MARY E. OSTROM, Mrs. ERASTUS CLARK, Mrs. SUSAN T. BAGG, Mrs. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, Mrs. THOMAS E. CLARK, Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, and others.

One by one they have passed away from among us, up through the gates of Heaven. I know not how to describe to you these pure spirits, so influential in their gentle, quiet and womanly ways of doing good. They do not seem to me to have died, but I think of them as wafted onward by the breath of the evening of their days, so well pictured in the following beautiful words:

"A cloud lay cradled near the setting sun,  
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow;  
Long had I watched it moving slow—  
O'er the calm radiance of the lake below;  
While ev'ry breath of eve that chanced to blow,  
Wafted the beauteous stranger to the glorious West.  
Emblem, methinks of the departing soul,  
Moved by the breath of God, and made to roll,  
Right onward to the gates of Heaven."

The following hymn was sung at the close of the afternoon service.

Glory to God in the highest,  
Glory to God, glory to God,  
Glory to God in the highest!  
Shall be our song to-day;  
Another year's rich mercies prove  
His ceaseless care and boundless love;  
So let our loudest voices raise  
Our anniversary song of praise.

CHORUS—Glory to God in the highest!  
Glory to God in the highest!  
[:Glory, glory, glory, glory,  
Glory be to God on high:]

Glory to God in the highest, &c., .  
Shall be our song to-day;  
And while we with the angels sing,  
Gifts, with the wise men, let us bring  
Unto the Babe of Bethlehem,  
And offer our young hearts to him. CRO.

Glory to God in the highest, &c.,  
Shall be our song to-day;  
O may we, an unbroken band,  
Around the throne of Jesus stand,  
And there with angels and the throng  
Of his redeemed ones, join the song. CRO.

## SUNDAY EVENING.

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Early in the evening, the church was filled with former members of the school and their friends, eager listeners to the reminiscences of childhood and Sunday School days. After prayer and reading of the Scriptures, the present Superintendent of the School, Mr. R. S. WILLIAMS, read the following

### HISTORICAL REPORT.

It seems to have been the custom for ministers who settled early in this country, to employ more or less of the time between the public services of the Sabbath in oral instruction to the young; and our esteemed fellow-townsmen, Mr. HARRY CAMP, says he distinctly remembers attending this kind of service when a child, under the pastorate of Rev. BETHUEL DODD, about 1798 or 1799; and a similar service was also conducted, but probably rather more like our modern Sunday Schools, by DOMINIE MARSHALL, in Deerfield, in 1804 to 1806. In the spring of 1815, EUNICE CAMP gathered a few children (mostly colored) in a small upper room of a building that stood where Warner & Ray's drug store now stands, corner of Genesee and Whitesboro streets: either of these cases would undoubtedly give to this locality the honor of the first Sunday School west of Albany.

The Sunday School, however, whose Semi-Centennial Anniversary we meet to-night to celebrate, met for the first time on Sunday the 16th day of October, 1816, and originated at the suggestion of a young lady, who at that time was visiting in the village of Utica from Troy, who enlisted the feelings of five young ladies of the village, in the then seemingly foolish project of Sunday teaching. These five young ladies, aged from 14 to 17 years, who pledged themselves to the enterprise, were a portion of a large number

(nearly one hundred) who had then recently made a public profession of religion, fruits of a revival, under the ministry of the late HENRY DWIGHT. The names of these five, who fifty years ago laid the foundation of what, under God's blessing, has proved a temple of good to a sinful world; the little one has become a thousand, its light shedding its healing rays to nearly every dark corner of this sin-stricken world, and to whose names we delight to do honor to-night, were :

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD,     | MARY E. WALKER,   |
| ALIDA M. VAN RENSSELAER, | SARAH A. MALCOLM, |
| CATHARINE W. BREESE.     |                   |

Of these, SARAH A. MALCOLM, now Mrs. BALL, honors us with her presence this evening. Two, MARY E. WALKER, and ALIDA M. VAN RENSSELAER, have gone to their reward, each clothed in the bright halo of hope in a blissful immortality; and we who assemble here to-night can truly say, "*they* have rested from their labors, but their works do follow them."

The School was first held in the wing of the frame building situated on the west side, No. 26 Hotel street, in the room of Miss OLIVE WHITE, an excellent member of the church, and is still standing, hardly altered in its exterior, on the same spot, just below Mechanics' Hall. At the outset, the propriety of desecrating the hours of the holy Sabbath day, for the purpose of teaching ignorant children to read, even in the Bible, elicited much, and some very warm discussion, and even devout Christians ominously shook their heads, and feared it was one of the ways in which Satan was transforming himself into an angel of light, to lead these young disciples astray. The pastor himself, the good Dr. DWIGHT, and some of the officers of the church, while not openly opposing the movement, gave no encouragement to an enterprise which they considered more the fruit of youthful inexperience and zeal, and which would soon exhaust itself without producing any very bad results; but God saw in it the grain of

mustard seed, and that small, feeble beginning has grown into a great tree of light, which has sheltered beneath its spreading branches multitudes now in glory, and multitudes more will rejoice through a long eternity, that they have ever been gathered within the folds of this Sabbath School. We can not do better than to quote the words of the late lamented Mrs. OSTROM, giving her own account of the first Sunday morning exercises.

It was a motley group of from twenty-five to thirty boys and girls, who assembled on that memorable Sabbath morning in that humble school room. The fortnight previous had been spent by the teachers, in visiting the streets where the lowest dregs of society found their wretched homes. With some clothing provided, the children were induced to promise attendance. They were made comparatively decent in their appearance; although, even then, the School would find its counterpart in the ragged mission schools of the present day. It is well remembered that, in a class of large, ungoverned lads, one of their number appended a profane oath to a rude remark addressed to his female teacher. The only materials which had been secured for teaching, were a few Testaments and catechisms, and a set of Lancasterian lesson cards which had been pasted upon large boards, so that one would answer to teach an entire class at the same time. In a short time, another school for colored children, and adults, (a large proportion of the latter class,) was held on Sabbath evening, in the same place, and taught by the same teachers. In this school, an aged and simple-hearted disciple of Christ, over sixty years of age, succeeded, beginning with the alphabet, to learn to read in the Testament. The process would be regarded by many as a tedious one. But poor JUDY, after spelling and repeating each separate word, would then put all the words together, the truth contained in the verse was comprehended, when the joy and satisfaction which would beam in her face might be envied by some accomplished students of the Bible. When the teacher, feeling that a longer time had been given to JUDY than was her due, would propose to leave her, with



a pleading tone, she would exclaim in her own simple, but expressive language, "oh! let me read a little longer, *it goes so good.*" The hours for commencing the school, both winter and summer, were eight o'clock in the morning, the afternoon session immediately after divine service, and the colored school in the evening. In winter, the days being short, the teachers seldom went home, but spent the twilight intermission in the school-room awaiting their colored pupils. After a few months, the school was divided, the boys being removed to another room, and taught by gentlemen. The colored class was also placed under other teachers. For some time none but children of the poor were admitted as scholars.

After some months, the school, now considerably increased in numbers, was removed to Minerva Hall, situate on the east side of Genesee street just below the corner of Broad, which was destroyed at the time of the great fire in 1837; and at this time there was much discussion as to the propriety of allowing all the children to attend the school, or to confine it as was at first intended, exclusively to the children of poor parents; it was finally decided that it was proper work for the Sabbath to instruct the young in the Bible, and that all children should be invited and urged to attend the school; from that point Christians generally gave it a helping hand, and what was far better for its growth, a cordial Christian sympathy; and began to feel a certain responsibility resting upon them to labor in it directly or indirectly; at this time it might be said the Sunday School was adopted as a child of the Church; and a regular organization was made to watch over and care for its interests—as we find in the Village Directory for 1817, published by WILLIAM WILLIAMS, No. 60 Genesee street, in which is the following record:

*Officers of the Sunday School, for 1816.*

ASAHEL DAVIS, President,  
JOHN H. OSTROM, Vice President,  
G. JOHN MILLS, Secretary,

EUROTAS P. HASTINGS, Treasurer,  
 TRUMAN SMITH, First Director,  
 WILLIAM GROVES, Second Director,  
 GEORGE CAMP, Third Director,  
 BRIGGS W. THOMAS, Fourth Director,

NATHAN D. SMITH, ROSWELL KEELER, S. W. HIGGINS,  
 JASON LOTHROP, Instructors.

*Utica Female Sunday School.*

CORNELIA R. VAN RENSSELAER, First Directress,  
 CATHARINE BREESE, Second Directress,  
 SUSAN WHITE, Superintendent,

ALIDA MARIA VAN RENSSELAER, MARY E. WALKER,  
 ELIZABETH BLOODGOOD, SARAH MALCOLM, Teachers.

*Sunday Evening School for People of Color.*

EUNICE CAMP, Superintendent,

ALIDA MARIA VAN RENSSELAER, MARY E. WALKER,  
 SARAH MALCOLM, Teachers.

Most of these have departed, but some are still living.

The school for colored people was no doubt for adults. The colored children attended the Sunday School with the white children, and were included in the same classes, no distinction being made. There were at that time in the village a large number of blacks, some of whom were *slaves*, slavery not having been abolished in this State until many years afterwards. They were poor and ignorant, and needed instruction as much as any children. The school was undoubtedly a great benefit to them, and quite a number were converted and united with the church.

This room being inconvenient of access, and not large enough to accommodate the increasing number of scholars, the school was removed in the year 1821 or 1822 into a brick building on the south side of Catharine street, corner of Franklin, and was taken down to make room for the present building, and the premises are now occupied by

Lennebacker & Delong. This building was two stories in height, the upper room being used for a Masonic Hall, and the first floor for a Lancasterian School—the boys occupying the latter, and the girls the former room, which separation continued until the year 1838, when, by a unanimous vote, the two departments were united.

At this time, the principal exercises of the scholars was to commit to memory verses of the Bible, and several instances are recorded of scholars having received rewards for having perfectly committed to memory and recited the whole New Testament.

The following extract from the pen of Mr. JOHN H. EDMONDS, one of the oldest surviving scholars, will best illustrate this practice:

“I entered the Sunday School as near as I can remember, in the year 1820, being then nine years of age, and continued therein as a scholar many years. Then, as I grew up, was made Secretary of the school, in which capacity I acted some time, and afterwards was for a time one of the teachers. I should be unable from recollection to fix the date of my entrance into the school with any certainty, but I had in my possession for a great number of years, and until quite recently, a leaf from my teacher's class book, in which, under the date of 1820, and for several months of that year, my name is entered with a record of the number of verses of scripture recited by me each Sunday. This leaf I have seen and examined within the last seven years, and regret that it is now lost or mislaid. I have searched for it among my papers, but cannot find it. I do not remember how it came into my possession, but it was probably given to me by my teacher as an evidence of progress in study. It is possible I may have entered the school in 1819, and if so, was only eight years old. But whichever year it may have been, I presume I am, without doubt, one of the oldest surviving scholars of the school.

“The record is of importance chiefly as showing the mode of instruction then pursued in the school, which I very distinctly remember; and that was, for the scholars to

commit to memory during the week as many verses of scripture as possible, and to recite the same to the teachers during the sessions of the school on Sunday. We were stimulated by promises of reward to increase the number of verses to the greatest possible extent, and the ambition of the boys was greatly excited to excel. The effect was really quite surprising, and I look upon it even now with wonder. My record shows, that at the early age of nine years, I frequently committed to memory during the week, (besides attending to studies in secular schools,) and recited to my teacher correctly on Sunday, as many as *one hundred verses*, and those not of familiar passages of scripture, but chapters and books consecutively. And this was a very common thing with the boys, not at all unusual, and many no doubt exceeding this quantity. The result was inevitable, that so far as the exercises of the school were concerned, they consisted entirely of recitations, with no time for explanations or religious instruction. The idea of the teachers of the school seemed to have been, to incorporate bodily into the heads of their pupils, the whole canon of the divine law, as an inexhaustible fountain from whence to draw during all after life. A grand thought, surely, but subject, practically, to very serious objections and difficulties, which the good sense of the teachers soon perceived, and a better course of instruction was gradually introduced. But this was not so easily or quickly done as might now be imagined. The whole subject was new; the teachers without chart or compass. The abounding facilities now possessed, unknown. It is impossible for the present generation to understand the progress of religious instruction within the last fifty years, as applied to Sunday Schools. There were very few books written for children on Biblical subjects, and but few for the assistance of teachers; not a single book of questions. I imagine that the condition of Sunday Schools then was about the same as when originated, not much changed or improved. Good Mr. RAIKES never could have conceived the enlargement and elevation his system would, in the progress of time attain. The teachers

of our school applied themselves diligently and zealously to improvements. Mr. PARMELE prepared a series of questions on the "Historical Parts of the New Testament," which were printed and introduced into the school with the happiest effect, and the attention of teachers and scholars was directed especially to the careful *study* of the scriptures. In the course of a few years, the school attained a high degree of prosperity and elevation, so as to attract attention abroad, and I doubt whether there was any where a Sunday School of greater merit in all the essentials of such an institution."

No explanation of any moment was given, and in fact no time was to be had, even if explanation was desired. Few or no question books were then in existence; and it is one of the honors claimed for the school, that among the very first question books and harmonies of the gospel ever printed, were prepared by its officers.\*

A brief report of the *Female Department only*, still in existence, of the first and second quarter of 1821, shows:

1. Average attendance of Teachers, 10.

" " Scholars, 50.

Whole number of verses from Scripture recited, 32,474.

2. Average attendance of Teachers, 10.

" " Scholars, 40.

Whole number of verses from Scripture recited, 43,900.

This practice, however, was soon abandoned, experience proving that a few verses thoroughly committed, and well

\* It is worthy of notice, that this improvement appeared at *three* points, entirely independent of each other, in 1824.

*First.* In the Association of Superintendents and Teachers of the "New York Sunday School Union."

*Second.* By Mr. TRUMAN PARMELE, of Utica, N. Y., of the "Oneida County Sunday School Union;" and

*Third.* The next packet from England brought intelligence of a similar plan introduced there.—*Extract from the Semi-Centennial Memorial Discourse of the N. Y. S. S. Union, February 25, 1866, page 44.*

explained, were productive of vastly more good both to pupils and teachers.

These rooms were large and convenient, and here the Sunday School continued with increasing prosperity for several years, and until about the year 1825, when it was removed to Hotel street, into a building owned by the First Presbyterian Society. This building was situated on the west side, on the premises now occupied by the dwelling of A. L. Woodruff, Esq.; it was a frame building of one story, and known as the Session House. A second story was added thereto for the accommodation of the Sunday School, and here it continued until the completion of the brick Presbyterian Church on Washington street, where the school was removed to the large and commodious rooms in the basement, in 1827; from this last removal dates its distinctive organization as the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church—the union with other churches having been concluded.

So great was the interest in Biblical instruction among all classes of Christians, about the time the school was removed from Catharine street to the Session Room on Hotel street, that a meeting was held at Mrs. GRIDLEY's school room in Utica, the 27th of May, 1825, pursuant to previous notice, by a number of persons desirous of instituting a system of Bible Classes, to promote the study of the sacred Scriptures.

The Rev. Mr. AIKEN officiated as Moderator, and the Rev. Mr. BRACE and W. KING, Esq., as Secretaries. The meeting was opened with prayer.

A Constitution was then presented, read and adopted, article by article, which is as follows:

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE BIBLE CLASS ASSOCIATION.

ARTICLE 1. The Bible Class Association shall consist of one Principal Director, the Teachers and members of the several classes.

ART. 2. The Principal Director and Teachers shall compose a Board of Managers for conducting the business of

the Association, and the Pastors of the Presbyterian Churches shall be members of the Board.

ART. 3. The Principal Director shall call the meetings of the Board. Meetings of the whole Association shall be appointed by the Board of Managers, and at all such meetings the Principal Director shall preside.

ART. 4. The Board of Managers shall choose a Principal Teacher, to act as their Secretary, who shall keep a record of the doings of the Board, and shall discharge the duties of the Principal Director, when he is absent.

ART. 5. The organization of the Association shall be as follows: Persons intending to become members (being males of fourteen years and females of twelve years of age,) shall be divided into three classes by lot, males and females apart, and the classes numbered 1st, 2nd, 3rd, &c. A Principal Director and three Teachers shall be chosen by the members upon the first ballot, and the Teachers, when chosen, shall be assigned to their respective classes by lot.

The Rev. Mr. LANSING, of Auburn, being present, addressed the meeting on the important objects of the Association.

The names of the persons present who were desirous of being members of classes were then taken, and divided by lot into three classes, as follows, viz:

*First Class.*—Julia Martin, Jane Foster, Cornelia Hitchcock, Lavinia Corey, Hannah Clark, Susan Wright, Jane Payne, Roxana Brewster, Elizabeth Hoyt, and Amanda Gaylord—10.

*Second Class.*—Sarah Ann Breese, Elizabeth Blake, Mary Platt, Sophia Harrington, Margaret Thompson, Elizabeth King, Maria Mather, Cresson, and Rebecca Dickens—9.

*Third Class.*—Alfred North, Thomas Long, James Greaves, John Greaves, James Wilson, George S. Wilson, William Lowell, John Merrell, Sterling Ely, Harvey Badger, Henry Ivison, Ransom Loyd, and Marius R. Robinson—13.

The members of classes then proceeded to elect a Principal Director, and three Teachers for the several classes, and made choice of Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. BRADISH and Mr. KING, for Teachers, and Rev. Mr. AIKEN, Principal Director.

It was then determined by lot, that Mr. BRADISH was assigned to the first class, Mr. WILLIAMS to the second, and Mr. KING to the third.

It was agreed that members of Sunday Schools should not be received into Bible classes, without the recommendation of their respective Superintendents.

The records of this Bible Class, very complete, down to March 31, 1833, are still preserved, including the several annual addresses.

Mr. SPENCER KELLOGG, WALTER KING, JOHN BRADISH, T. E. CLARK, and WILLIAM WILLIAMS were among its permanent teachers. Mr. WALTER KING prepared and published a very valuable Question Book, which is used to some extent to this day. Of it, Mr. WM. TRACY, long a member, writes: "I presume you know I was not exactly connected with the Sunday School. My immediate connection was with the Bible Classes. I became a teacher in them early in 1831, and remained in the position until we were involved in the difficulties which led us to the Dutch church. The history of the Bible Classes during that period was a deeply interesting one. They were connected with the Sunday School, and the same lesson was gone over in both schools, many of the teachers of the Sunday School attending the Bible classes at noon. During the existence of the classes, many hundred persons were connected with them, and a record of the deaths of members, and those who had been members was kept. After sixteen years from its organization, Mr. WALTER KING, who kept this record, informed me he knew of none where the person dying was not sustained by a Christian hope. Of the teachers, during the period I was connected with the classes, Messrs. WHITTLESEY, W. KING, THOS. E. CLARK, W. WILLIAMS, Doct. GRANT [of Oroomia,] and Deacon MATHER, are dead. Judge BACON, and I believe Judge HAYDEN remain."



The following extract from the report of the School for 1856, will serve to show the feelings on at least one member of that Bible Class. "One teacher, (the venerable Deacon MATHER,) has been called during the past year from his labors on earth to a glorious rest in heaven. He loved the Sabbath School. No one visited it more frequently, none inquired with more interest after its prosperity; for many years he was intimately associated with it—being a member of the session whose duty it was (under the organization which then existed,) to provide teachers, visit the destitute parts of the city, to bring the vicious and ignorant under religious influences, also a committee of the session to meet the school every Sabbath morning. Several months before his death, (then far advanced in life) he took charge of an interesting Bible Class of young ladies, intending to retain it only till another teacher could be obtained. To his surprise and gratification he was most earnestly requested to remain. In this class his whole heart was absorbed. In conversation with a friend, shortly preceding his last illness, he remarked: I never was happier than when teaching the Bible, adding, although the Bible has ever been my daily study, having read it through eleven times during the past thirteen years, I am just commencing to learn the importance and preciousness of its truths, and if I could but succeed in imparting to the young the love which I feel for the precious volume, I can depart in peace. It was an interesting sight to see the old man, bending beneath the weight of four-score years, imparting instruction to a band of youthful, attentive listeners, and the tears *they* shed over his open grave, were a beautiful tribute to his memory."

Here the school remained, until that sad, sad Sunday night, the 13th January, 1851, when its funeral pyre was lighted by the incendiary torch in the hands of one of its own children, and our beautiful house was burned with fire, the place where our fathers worshipped, and we were baptized, was destroyed.

At this fire all, with but a few meagre exceptions of the

minute and class books of the school, the records of its officers and teachers, were destroyed. The few records and minute books which were preserved from destruction were saved in this wise.

At tea that eventful Sunday evening, the late Mrs. OSTROM, (one of the five founders of the school,) was in doubt as to the time of the occurrence of some event, and said to her father, (the late Hon. THOMAS WALKER) "the Sunday School records will show the date, for I have seen it entered there." She attended the evening service at the church, but forgetting to look at the record she wanted till after she had left the church, returned to find the Sexton, the late ISAAC MERRELL, who had just blown his last light out, preparatory to locking the door. With his permission she groped her way to the Secretary's desk in the Sunday School room, and in order to be sure that she obtained the one she wanted, she took an armful of the record and minute books, and carried them home with her. In less than seven hours thereafter, that beautiful church was in ashes, and except the few books she took home with her, every vestige of the written records of the Sunday School was destroyed, and that, too, by the act of one who had been a member of it.

In the interim, while the present edifice was being built, the school was carried on with some little irregularity in various public halls, but usually at Mechanics' or Concert Hall, corner of Broad and John street, and it was owing in no small degree to the patient and untiring efforts of Mr. GEO. TRACY, at that time Superintendent, that it was kept together at all; but the record shows a fair attendance during *all* that time of inconvenience. On the first Sunday in November, 1852, we met for the first time in our present pleasant rooms, with about 160 scholars, under the Superintendency of GEO. D. FOSTER, who was shortly after succeeded by THOMAS MAYNARD, under whose energetic and inspiring labors the school very soon attained the large average attendance of about 300 scholars, more than 100 of which were gathered into several large and interesting adult

Bible Classes, occupying the galleries of the church, while the large Infant Department was obliged, for want of room, to occupy the chapel below the Sunday School room—but notwithstanding these inconveniences the school was greatly prospered, and the records show that at nearly every communion season, some members of the school were gathered into the visible church on the profession of their faith, and during the great religious awakenings of 1858 and 1863, these accessions to the church were numbered by scores.

During Mr. MAYNARD'S connection with the school, attention was largely turned toward Mission School enterprises, and the earnest activity and interest which this school has always manifested in this branch of Christian effort, is not among the least of the causes of its prosperity and success, nor among the dimmest of the jewels we wear in the chaplet, with which we crown its fiftieth birthday. This, perhaps, is not exactly the proper place in which to speak of the West Utica, the Deerfield Union, or Hope Chapel Sunday Schools. The history which each one of these schools are making for themselves, and the good influences they are exerting, are the highest eulogies the parent school can fondly wish for.

After Mr. MAYNARD'S removal from the city, the school lost none of its success or usefulness under the admirable management of his successor, Mr. ERWIN A. HAMMOND.

We come now to speak more particularly of the manner in which the school was conducted in the days of its early history, and of the characteristics of those noble ones, who, in the infancy of this school, by their high toned piety, energetic perseverance, and close, careful attention to its practical workings, gave to it that broad, deep and firm foundation, upon which has been erected the structure we delight to honor, and to which, under God, this school owes more than to any other one cause, its wide spread influence for good, and its present prosperity, and I beg here to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. J. H. EDMONDS, for his large contribution of material relating to the first Superintendents and earlier teachers.

Of Mr. PARMELE, an old pupil says :

"My recollections of my old teacher and friend, Mr. PARMELE, are of the most delightful character. It was my good fortune to be placed under his charge in the Sunday School at a very early age, and I can never forget the deep and tender interest he ever manifested in his scholars and in everything that pertained to them. I am as averse as any one can be to extravagant panegyric, and, doubtless, if I had known my friend as an equal in years, and mixing with the world, I should have seen in him, as well as in all others, the bad and the good combined. But he went from us before I could thus judge him, and I knew him only within the walls of the Sunday School, and there he ever appeared to me as nearly perfect. To us, his pupils, he was all gentleness and goodness. He ruled literally by the law of love. No harsh word ever fell from his lips, and so singular was his self-command, and his exceeding amiability, that during the many years I was under his care, I never knew him to give way to the least anger or even petulance. He bore with our follies, our inattention and our disobedience, with the most wonderful patience. He entered into our childish feelings so thoroughly, and sympathized so deeply with us, that he seemed like one of us, and yet still so greatly our superior. I am sure he lost nothing by thus identifying himself with all our views, but rather our respect as well as love was thereby increased. His influence over us was unbounded. So frank and generous, and confiding was he, and so entirely devoted to our best interests, that he made his character felt by us, and we *knew* that he was our best friend. He was so, indeed, and the whole business of his life seemed to be to render us happy here and happy in the life to come. He was unceasing in his efforts to render the Sunday School the best and pleasantest place we could find.

'He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,  
Allured to brighter worlds and led the way.'

"And it was evident that to himself it was the happiest spot, for never did he seem to enjoy himself so much as with

his class about him. In this, doubtless, was the secret of his success. We felt that to him the teaching of us was not a task, but a delight. His thoughts were upon us out of the school as well as in it, and each returning Sabbath proved that, during the week, he had been devising plans for our benefit and instruction. It was a great honor, and so esteemed by the boys, to belong to his class. I am sure no father could more tenderly cherish and love his own children, than our dear teacher did his pupils. And not only in the school, and religious matters, was he earnest in our behalf, but he sought opportunities to promote our interests in advancing us in life, and much good did he accomplish in this way. In short, his whole heart was engaged with us, and so entirely did he seem to be occupied with us, that, in my simplicity, I then supposed he had nothing else to do but to care for us. He had all the gentleness and tenderness of a woman, with the firmness and energy of a man. Many characters were formed by him, and many now with him in glory, and many on earth, from their full hearts, call him blessed."

Another scholar, a pupil of Mr. WILSON, says: "Out of eight boys in his class, at the same time I was, seven of them afterward became either ministers of the Gospel, missionaries, or ruling elders in the church of Christ, and the one exception became, in after life, a prominent leader in the army of Texas, and greatly aided that people in achieving their independence. The great power for good in him consisted in the interest he took in us outside the Sunday School, thus drawing us to him by the strongest cords that can bind one heart to another, to-wit, 'sympathy and love.'"

The following extract was taken from the regular report of the School, read at the forty-third anniversary, 1859:

"While we have many reasons to rejoice on account of our present prosperity, we are compelled to call up the mournful remembrance of the illness and death of our most efficient and best beloved teacher, who was also one of the founders of this school—Mrs. MARY E. OSTROM. For

forty-two years and eight months she was connected with this School ; she has stood as a sentinel upon the walls of this Zion, and ceased not to warn sinners to 'flee from the wrath to come.' Ready in every good word and work ; the Sabbath School and Bible Class was her peculiar province, and here, in this school, God has permitted her to labor for these long years, and to see from the small beginnings in the rude building on Hotel street, where, forty-three years ago this very day, she assisted to plant the grain of mustard seed, which has become a noble tree, and sheltered beneath its spreading branches multitudes now in glory ; and multitudes more will rejoice through a long eternity that they have ever been gathered within the fields of this Sabbath School. Propriety would not allow, nor time permit us to refer to the many interesting incidents connected with her long experience as a Sabbath School teacher. Her faithfulness was equalled only by her untiring energy and prayerful consistency. Uncompromising in the slightest degree, her consistent Christian character was a living epistle, known and read by all her pupils as a full confirmation of the precepts they heard from her lips. She loved the Bible above all things, and the real pleasure she herself took in its perusal, was one of the strong incentives which led her to make others share the pleasures thus enjoyed. For several years past she has taught two large Bible classes—one in this, and one in the school at Deerfield. The 12th day of June, 1859, was the last Sabbath she was able to fill her accustomed place in her class. When it was apparent to her own mind that her stay with us was short, she was diligent about her Master's business, feeling strongly that she must work while the day lasted, for the night of the grave was fast approaching, wherein no work could be done. Faithful to her Saviour's cause to the very last, so long as breath remained, she was willing and did spend it in the service of him she loved.

“And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying: Write; Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the spirit: that they may rest from their labors

and their works do follow them.' The void left by the loss of one, who filled so large a space in our school, must of necessity be proportionably great. Our prayer is, that the mantle of her usefulness may fall upon those of us who remain, that the joyous returns which are felt in the conscious effects of striving to do good, may lead others to unite with us in the endeavor to promote the growth and prosperity of this branch of the Redeemer's vineyard, that we may all with her receive the welcome plaudits of 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord;' but we forbear and will add no more, as with her characteristic unselfishness, one of her last requests to her fellow-laborers was, 'When I am gone, don't talk about me, talk of Christ, always speak of Christ.' Let her example encourage us not to be weary in well doing, 'for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'"

The following is from the sermon preached at her funeral:

"It was, however, as a Sabbath School teacher that her pre-eminence most conspicuously appeared. In connection with four other young ladies, three of whom survive her, she established the first Sunday School organized west of Schenectady, and with one or two brief intervals she continued actively engaged in it until her last illness.

"And here, and in other schools, with which she was connected, she exhibited gifts in teaching, and achieved a success in it to which few parallels are known. It was always difficult to obtain a place in her class, and she was always embarrassed to keep her class down to a manageable size. Who that has beheld it, will ever forget the beautiful sight of her scholars circled about her in successive rows, some on benches or chairs, and others on stools, literally sitting at her feet, ranging in years from the youth just passing into womanhood, to the matron advancing in years, each with attentive ears and often with flooded eyes. And of the large series who passed under her instruction, few were taught for any length of time without forming a loving acquaintance with Christ."

The marble tablet to her memory on the walls of our

Sunday School rooms can hardly last as long as we shall love to cherish the memory of her goodness. We would not estimate her usefulness by the number known to have been hopefully converted through her agency, and we have no data by which accuracy could be ensured, but making the statement as an inference somewhat, it is supposed that as many as an hundred of her pupils must have become professed disciples of Christ.

The report contains the following obituary notices:

"Mrs. SOPHIA WILLIAMS was a lady in whom the natural graces of a lovely disposition and a bright and cultivated mind were ennobled by high and active Christian principle. Acute in intellect, sound in judgment, active in temperament, she consecrated all to the service of her Master, and was in truth zealous in well doing. Though her tastes, as well as her sense of duty, led her to find her chief employment within the circle of her own home, wherein she was especially assiduous, and wherein, both as wife and mother, she shone most conspicuously; yet she was not negligent of such outside claims as could be reconciled with the obligations due to a numerous family. In the maternal association, and in the Sabbath School, she labored cheerfully and faithfully, and will be remembered by contemporaries as one of the foremost teachers of her time."

It having long been her prayer that at least one of her sons might become a missionary, not long before her death, attending a meeting, where a collection was taken up in behalf of Foreign Missions, a slip of paper was found among the donations on which was written, "I have given my son." Her prayer was more than answered, for, after she had been called to her home above, two of her sons connected themselves to the work in the Foreign Missionary field.

"Mrs. THOMAS E. CLARK was well-known in her day as one who was prominent in all labors of Christian enterprise. Few ladies of this city have equalled her in active, stirring charity. She saw everywhere fields of missionary work



lying immediately around her, which her conscience imperiously summoned her to enter and occupy. For the calls of "society," so called, she felt little interest; in the church, in the Sunday School, in the various religious enterprises, there was enough, and more than enough to interest and command all her faculties. So well-known were her traits that it was common to hear it surmised, whenever Mrs. CLARK was seen riding abroad, that she was bound on some mission of piety, some errand of love."

Prominent among the earlier and most active laborers for the success and prosperity of the school, was Mrs. SARAH K. CLARKE, of whom the following brief extract will speak in more glowing and juster terms than any thing I can pen, and are copied from records of the Forty-second Anniversary Exercises:

Copy of a letter received from Mr. HOVEY K. CLARKE, addressed to JOHN F. SEYMOUR, enclosing a copy of a paper written by his mother while Superintendent, shortly before her death:

*My Dear Sir:—*

I am afraid you will think I am not very prompt in complying with your request, to send you a copy of that paper of my mother's, which I showed you when you were here. I have not forgotten it, and I think it is quite right that you should have it, and yet I have felt a little reluctance to subjecting it to the scrutiny, and possibly to the criticism of strangers. It is not probable that she ever imagined any other eye but her own would ever see it, (nor would it have been seen, but for the sickness which resulted in her death, so soon after it was written.) And yet, as an illustration of the prayer and effort which has been bestowed upon that school, and thus exhibiting the way through which God has bestowed his feelings upon them, I cannot but regard it as a paper of deep interest to the school which had so excited her earnest solicitude. That it may quicken her successors to a like degree of labor and unction, is my hope in sending it to you. The pa-

per bears date, you will observe, the 4th of June, 1827. The torn fragment, upon which it was written, indicates that it was hurriedly penned, on her return from the meeting of which it speaks. *It was the last of such meetings which she ever attended.* She had been, as all who knew her would say, a faithful laborer in the service of the Sabbath School in the First Presbyterian Church of Utica. Those who witnessed her labors would not probably impute to her any want of zeal in that service, and yet, such was her appreciation of the work, that she pledges herself to increased prayer and effort in the interesting work. There is a lesson in this that I desire most earnestly to learn for myself. God grant you all may learn it too.

I am, my dear sir, very faithfully, yours,

HOVEY K. CLARKE.

[COPY.]

“UTICA, JUNE 4th, 1827.

“This evening attended the Sabbath School Monthly Concert; heard much interesting intelligence, and much to call forth the prayers and sympathies of every feeling heart in beholding the moral desolation, the vice and ignorance which pervades a great portion of our country. Now, O, my Saviour and Redeemer, let the subject of Sabbath Schools rest with deep weight upon my heart. And by the grace of God assisting me during the present month, 1st—I will endeavor to make the cause of Sabbath Schools more a subject of special prayer; 2d—I will endeavor to enlist the feelings of my friends and acquaintances more in this cause; 3d—I will be more faithful in my duties in the school, and try to make the exercises more profitable and interesting, both to scholars and visitors. And now, O, Lord, thou who doth witness these my resolutions, grant me grace to bring them into practice, and thou shalt have all the glory.”

If the influence of **TRUMAN PARMELE** and **G. S. WILSON**, first among the Superintendents of the school, was world-wide and lasting upon those who were among its scholars in the days of its early history, none the less so was that of **THOMAS MAYNARD**, upon those who, in later years, received their inspiration to earnest Sabbath School work from his cheerful beaming face, and joined with him; or learned from his lips how to sing the sweet songs of Zion. In almost every city and town throughout the great west, can be met with those who love to revere his name and cherish his memory. The great secret of his wonderful success in the Sunday School work, was, he loved the children with all his heart, and when they saw his smiling face, they could not help loving him in return. He always wanted to do them good, and was constantly inspiring others to join with him in the good work; hence his large influence in forming mission schools, and the three flourishing mission schools now in connection with our own school, owes, doubtless, more to his labors than to any other one cause.

The little marble tablet to his memory in our Sunday School room, tells how we loved him, and the following extract from the annual report of the school, the year of his death, will show how his loss was felt:

"But a familiar voice has been hushed. **THOMAS MAYNARD**, though not of us, was near and dear to us, and when in our last report we made mention of his removal to another field of labor, how remote from our minds was the thought that he was so soon to be gathered to the slumbers of the grave. For many years, he had stood among us in the van of the Sunday School army, and we looked to him as a wise counsellor, an earnest laborer, and our animating leader in sacred song. His name has been too often honored with praises, to need extended eulogy now. Though time may obliterate much of the remembrance of our bereavement and loss, yet never can be effaced from our hearts the impression his welcome presence always inspired, or the influence his words of cheer exerted in our midst. Be-

neath the drooping boughs of Forest Hill, he shall slumber till the resurrection morn, but his voice though hushed to earth's discordant notes, now rings in clearer, sweeter strains of melody amid the seraphic choristers on high."

Found as they may be, adorning positions in almost every department of life, it is with feelings of a just and laudable pride, that we call to mind and honor, as former members of this school, the names of some of the most noted and respected members of all the learned professions, and in the more intricate pursuits of science and literature; in diplomacy, too, it will be seen we are not without a representative, when it is known that out of five commercial treaties with the great Western powers and the Chinese government, three of them were drafted by one, who, up to the time of his departure from his native land, had for the best portion of his life, been connected with it, either as a teacher or scholar, and who still retains a lively interest in its welfare.

When the clarion notes were rung out that men were wanted for the war to preserve our glorious Union, it received no half-way response from former, nor the then present members of this school; its instructions had taught them self-denial and self-sacrifice; in all places of trust and danger, they could be found; in the ranks of the army, at the front, in the services of the Christian and sanitary commissions, in the hospitals, in the camps, on the battle field, every where beside the wounded and dying soldier, bathing fevered and fainting brows, receiving parting and dying messages for fathers, mothers and sisters at home; but more than all, pointing the wayward ones to the blessed Saviour, and holding aloft the glorious cross of Christ, and encouraging weak and fainting ones to stronger faith and hope in Him. Their influences for good were always felt, and when we were called, (as often we were,) to gather around their coffin, shrouded with the "old flag" they loved so well, and in defense of which they had sealed that love with their lives, we buried them in sadness, but loved them even more, and turned with joyful pride to the page on

our records where their names were inscribed, and believed in the evidences they gave, that they had gone to join that "great company which no man can number, whose names are written in heaven," in the "Lamb's book of life."

And what shall be said of those who have gone out from our ranks as standard-bearers of the cross of Christ, as watchmen on the walls of Zion, and are to-day in almost "every kindred, tongue, and tribe," telling the story of Calvary, or warning sinners "to flee from the wrath to come." Many of them, no doubt, could say as one of their number has said, "the first desire I ever felt to be a missionary, was excited in the mind by my teacher in that Sunday School."

Some have rested from their labors on earth, and gone above to their reward, and the bright examples they have left behind them, is our continued incentive to emulate their good works, in endeavoring to instil in the minds of our scholars "the missionary spirit." Others are laboring still in the vineyard, fulfilling the divine commission to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," gathering, we trust, a precious harvest of souls which shall shine as bright jewels in the crown the Master gives them for their reward in well doing. HARRISON GRAY OTIS DWIGHT, Dr. ASAHEL GRANT, WEBSTER, LOOMIS, SAMPSON, GARRET, and a host of others, more than thirty in all, have gone out from this Sunday School, as devoted laborers in the cause of Christ, either as ministers or missionaries, and it is believed the sun has not set on all their number in more than forty years. Who can estimate the influence for good which has thus had its origin here? Eternity alone can reveal it, and God alone can measure it!

## ADDRESS OF ANSON J. UPSON.

In addressing this large assembly, I am much embarrassed, not only by the very complimentary introduction of my friend, DR. FOWLER, and by the fact that the historical atmosphere about us to-day, is already exhausted of almost all its reminiscences ; but especially by a question of genealogy.

Last Sabbath afternoon, in the Reformed Dutch Church, where the congregation had assembled to bid farewell to a building in which they had worshipped for thirty years, JOHN F. SEYMOUR, ESQ., read from the records of the Sunday School of that Church, a minute statement of the attendance and scholarship of one ANSON J. UPSON ; and now that same Sunday School boy appears before you, as having been a scholar in the School of the First Presbyterian Church. Here is, apparently, some misunderstanding—some confusion of dates—some doubtful or double relationship. "Somebody's boy" is here, but he could hardly be asked to speak on this platform to-night, were it not that in the year 1830, the following formidable document was issued, a part of which reads as follows :

"UTICA, Oct. 1st, 1830.

"This certifies that ANSON JUDD UPSON is in good and regular standing, as a member of Sabbath School No. 1, of the First Presbyterian Church ; and he is hereby dismissed and recommended to the care of the Sabbath School of the Reformed Dutch Church.

[Signed,]

B. W. THOMAS,  
*Supt. S. S. No. 1."*

From the date of this paper, it must be evident that the memory of your speaker should be quite far-reaching and retentive to recall much that would be interesting in relation to the Sabbath School of this Church.

It is, perhaps, a mistake, yet it has sometimes seemed to me that possibly many of the very interesting reminiscences,

to which we have all listened with so much pleasure, were remembered at second hand. I may be peculiar in this regard, yet I can hardly recall very distinctly what would seem, now, likely to make a deep impression upon a boy's mind at the time. I remember, of course, the glorious old church, and the "Session Room," and how we boys used to go under the church, up into that room, run down the steps of the platform-pulpit between the doors, and then run up the aisles of the room—that were "so nice to run up," to the back doors that led separately into the two Sunday School rooms for the boys and girls. I remember those square pews, where we used to sit all round the teacher with his desk in the center. I can see my teacher now—MR. ALFRED HUNT, and yet I remember distinctly but one lesson—about the reality of future punishment. We had a good class. Even here, in the presence of "GEO. S. WILSON's class," we are not ashamed to mention their names: SAMUEL E. WARNER, HENRY C. POTTER, SAMUEL L. MERRELL, FRANK FAY, SEYMOUR LANSING, and HARRISON DANA who so sadly was drowned in his boyhood. I will not say what excellent and useful men these names now represent. You know how they reflect honor upon this home of their boyhood, by their great usefulness and success in life. Two of them you have called from their spheres of honorable duty to take part in these services. How I wish all of us might sit again around our early teacher and thank him for those lessons, which though we may not distinctly remember them all, have influenced our life.

Even here, I feel as if I must do honor also to the teachers of my later boyhood, in the old Dutch Church—MR. JAS. KNOX and MR. JOHN G. FLOYD. A lesson taught me by the latter is repeated every year to successive Junior Classes in Hamilton College. I can never forget one occasion. You will not wonder that a Fourth of July Sunday School celebration should leave its impression upon the memory of a boy. Need I tell you how we Dutch Church boys and girls formed a procession on Broad Street, in front of the old church? how we marched so grandly "up Broad,

down Genesee, up Whitesboro Street to Cooper's Orchard ?' how we carried a banner, extemporized with historical propriety by DR. BETHUNE, of white silk, trimmed with orange colored fringe, and with orange colored ribbons dependent, held by a little boy on each side of a big one who held the staff? I have forgotten the name of the big boy and of the other little one, but I can see now how the orchard looked when we marched into it—so full of faces and banners. Doubtless we had "remarks," but I don't remember them. The bell of the foundry on the other side of the canal, kept ringing, it was said to disturb us, but most likely with patriotic intent. I know we marched back into the First Church, perhaps for more speeches. I only remember how grandly those great columns towered above the pulpit, with the organ between them; but especially how small our little banner of white silk looked, with its simple gilt inscription—"Hosanna," by the side of the great standard of the First Church School, with its varied and beautiful emblazonry. Somehow I felt as if I wanted to stand up for that little banner then; and though I would not forget my first love, I fear I have not yet quite lost the feeling.

These, I know, are trifling reminiscences, hardly worth repeating. Do not suppose that in my opinion, these are all that remain in the memory of any of us. Many an event in life is no longer remembered, the effect of which will never pass away. So with the lessons of our Sabbath School days. God bless the teachers who taught us so many! One thing is certain: if we may determine the value of the lessons taught by their effect upon character, then may we be sure that too high an estimate can not be placed upon the instructions of the past fifty years. Few of these lessons may be, singly, remembered, yet the many souls who have gone up to heaven from these Sabbath School classes, attest their value. More than this: the hundred missionaries and ministers, and the many private Christians, who here so early learned to find the way of life, could never have walked therein, if a supernatural power—the Holy Spirit, had not made the words of these teachers influential in



leading them thither. I find in the result of their labors, if I did not otherwise know it, that these teachers of the past were men and women of *prayer*. For, in answer to their prayers, God impressed the lessons they taught, so deeply upon the minds and hearts of their scholars, that they entered into and formed a part of their character, and so can hardly be recalled. Very few men have, like ROBERT SOUTHEY, in his autobiography, the introspective mental power to trace their own intellectual development. To still fewer, has God granted the ability to trace back the development of their own religious character, even to its earthly sources.

But, God be thanked, each one of us can remember enough! How delightful have been the reminiscences of the past few days in public assemblies and in private circles, all over this happy city! We remember enough to pay deserved honor to our early benefactors. We remember enough to know that their work was for Christ! that with them Christ was all in all! The poor boy who left your city in his boyhood to begin a career of vice, and came back in his early manhood, to die of a loathsome disease in your hospital, remembered enough when he could recall nothing but the name of his early Sunday School teacher, Mrs. OSTROM, that so she might hasten to his side and lead him, as she did, in his dying hour to Jesus.

Teachers of to-day, as you listen to the praises that have been lavished upon the teachers of the past, thank God and take courage! Fifty years may pass, but you and your work will not be forgotten. And what professional or political honor can compare with this? It "lays hold upon eternal life." Can you conceive of a more thrilling joy than to meet, as believe me, you may, on some heavenly hill, a ransomed soul, whom your poor words have led to the Saviour, and with him worship there forever our common Lord!

## ADDRESS OF REV. EDWARD BRIGHT.

REV. MR. BRIGHT referred to 1824, when having come to Utica from a neighboring town, he heard of a Sabbath School Examination which was to be held in the Presbyterian Church—that old wooden church that then stood on the corner of Washington and Liberty streets, with its pulpit on one side, a gallery and an organ opposite, and a gallery at each end, and seats enough below to accommodate, as it seemed to him then, half the town. He succeeded in securing a seat in the west gallery, from which he saw and heard all. Every place where any one could sit or stand was occupied. Hundreds of Sunday School children were there, in the body of the house, and they answered the many questions asked them by the Superintendent, in a manner that showed an almost incredible amount of knowledge of the Scriptures, for every answer was given in an appropriate verse, and that not in concert, but one by one. When this most interesting exercise was concluded, and it was the longest of the evening, a boy, about the speaker's own age, came upon a small platform in front of the pulpit, to deliver an address; the rhetoric, the logic, and the elocution of which electrified at least one young heart in that audience. It was there, in that old gallery, while under the spell of the eloquence of JOHN H. EDMONDS, than which name none is more worthy to be beloved and honored, that that one heart formed the purpose to become a Sunday School scholar.

The speaker referred to the following Sabbath, when he was so kindly received by Mr. PARMELE, the Superintendent, and assigned to the class of Mr. GEORGE S. WILSON, when he was surprised to find among six or seven other boys, the eloquent young orator who had drawn him to the school. It was such a class as any one might be proud to be connected with, and no words could overdraw the admiration and love in which every member of it held his teacher. The glance of his eye, and the pressure of his hand, were but the expression of love—of love so genuine

and so deep that no amount of care was too great for him to give that group of boys. He was not only one of the most intelligent and loving of teachers while with his class, but tasked every resource to make them happier and better. He formed them, with some other boys of the school, into a Juvenile Society, which held weekly meetings—a unique organization, which was officered by its own members, but of which Mr. WILSON was the head, and in which he and they spent many of the most delightful hours of their lives. It existed for the double purpose of personal improvement and improving the condition of others. Reading and conversation were the staples of every meeting, and from what was there read and said, combined with what was heard in the Sabbath School, the speaker believed that many a boy had received the decisive influence that determined the aims of life. For himself he could say that he did not know the man to whom he was so much indebted as to GEORGE S. WILSON; and if those now in manhood, who had in youth felt the beneficent power of his spirit, but knew his resting place, they could not do a more fitting service than to place over his grave some memorial, that should speak to all who saw it, of the affection with which a Sabbath School Class cherished the recollections of their Sabbath School Teacher.

The speaker referred to the circumstances which led Mr. WILSON, called to a position of wider responsibility, to leave the school. It was then the good fortune of the class to be placed under the instruction of Mr. FREDERIC S. WINSTON, a gentleman who now presides with unsurpassed courtesy and ability, over one of the largest Life Insurance Companies in the world, and who then presided over a class of seven or eight boys, in such a way as to make them value not less his love as a teacher than his friendship as a man. In this class the speaker continued to be one of the happiest of scholars, until he was “drafted,” on a never-to-be-forgotten Sabbath, to become himself the teacher of a newly formed class of little fellows, ranging from six to eight years; and while claiming no part of the credit of

making them what they are, he had been profoundly thankful, since coming to Utica, to take by the hand men filling honorable positions and possessing the warm respect of the community, who were part of the joyous group, his first Sunday School Class.

This was when there was but one Sunday School in Utica, and that one representing all Christian denominations. When the time came for the division of the school, which was accomplished in the most fraternal spirit, and, as was believed, for the highest good of all, the speaker, perhaps because there "was much water there," became connected with the school of the Baptist church; and Utica continued to be his home through ten or twelve years of his earlier manhood. "But," he said, addressing Dr. FOWLER, "the years spent in this city in connection with this school, and the subsequent years spent in other places, and in other pursuits, have not obliterated my appreciation of what I owe to the School, whose Fiftieth Anniversary we now celebrate. If you were to demand payment of the debt, I could do no more than to plead bankruptcy, and throw myself upon your mercy. I owe you more than I can ever pay; and, while I confess this, my prayer for this venerable church with its honored Sunday School, is 'Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.'"

The speaker said it was not necessary to go beyond the record of the School there represented, to demonstrate the great and comprehensive worth of the Sunday School as a Christian institution. If the boy was father of the man; if as "the twig is bent the tree is inclined;" if every place of trust and honor, now in the hands of the men of this generation, both in the church and in the world, must inevitably pass into the hands of those who are now children;—if the pulpit and the pew, the bench of justice, the seats of legislation, the halls of learning, the marts of business, are all passing into the hands of a generation now playing in the streets—who has the words to describe, who has the heart to conceive, of the importance of bringing these children under the influence of an institution so eminently adapted to nurture in them every good principle, and to fit them for

the dignity and gravity of their swift-coming responsibilities! A little child, in very humble circumstances, said the speaker, died a few days ago in a school with which I am now connected. She died with her hands uplifted in repeating that unspent petition of an innumerable multitude of children:

‘Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep—’

Here her little hands fell at her side. Her spirit had gone to Him who gave it. She had been in the Sunday School long enough to learn that she had a “Father in the promised land,” and of Him she loved to sing. She had learned, too, that her Father had given Commandments for all to obey; and when she heard a boy in the street, one day, profane His holy name, she was filled with distress, and ran to him, saying, in tones of sorrowful concern, “Johnny, Johnny, you are breaking one of our Commandments,” and then she repeated it to him. “One of our Commandments.” Can there be a higher, holier, more blessed mission, than to give the children of a generation, and of a generation in such a country as ours, the conception of a *personal* inheritance in the Commandments of God? Can there be a broader, surer basis of an all-controlling moral obligation? Can anything exceed the sublimity of a work, the aim of which is to make the children worthy of the trust to be committed to them here, and to fit them for the crowns, and palms, and robes, and harps, that await them yonder? The reminiscences of the last two days have made more fragrant the names of those who once labored in this School, and who have gone where they have higher illustrations than can be conceived by any heart here, of the glory of its fruits. Heed, then, the three-fold argument, growing more eloquent and irresistible, as it rises and widens—the argument that comes from your own history, from the responsibilities that are before the children of this generation, and from the fruits as they appear in the light of heaven. Let this Triple Argument urge us to an ever increasing devotion to the Sabbath School.

## CLOSING EXERCISES MONDAY EVENING.

At the close of the Sunday evening exercises, Rev. Dr. FOWLER announced that he would be happy to see the friends of the school at his house on Monday night. In response to this invitation, a large company was gathered at the pastor's residence in Rutger Place, where they were most hospitably entertained by its inmates. So far from being wearied by the transactions of the last forty-eight hours, the guests would gladly have regarded the Jubilee as but just begun, and would have been very willing to extend it through the week. The materials of fifty years' history so copiously furnished in letters, reports and addresses had awakened in the more elderly members of the company, a train of delightful reminiscences. Groups of contemporaries were gathered in every room. With the oldest of these, a brisk comparison of notes, and a careful revision of dates was the order of the night. Hotly contested points of ancient date and doubtful importance were, of course, left to the decision of "the oldest inhabitant" present, who, as umpire, distinguished himself in nothing so much, perhaps, as in brilliant proofs of a lack of memory. To those who are the present managers of the school, and to the worthy pastor of the church, the scene must have been one of unalloyed satisfaction. It was an appropriate close to a celebration which had been successful throughout.

In the course of the evening, Mr. THOMAS ALLEN CLARKE, of New Orleans, who had been a close attendant on all the exercises, but had, thus far, taken no part in them, was called out. Mr. CLARKE responded to the call with much feeling, and to admirable purpose. He gave the

company a glittering string of reminiscences, so interesting, that many listeners who could not be supposed to feel any great interest in occurrences and persons so remote from their own time, confessed that they found themselves as completely identified with them as the speaker himself.

Before dispersing, the company resolved itself into committee of the whole, and voted that the proceedings of the Semi-Centennial Jubilee should be collected and published in a permanent volume. For this purpose, a committee of publication was appointed, consisting of T. W. SEWARD, A. J. UPSON, R. S. WILLIAMS and S. E. WARNER. The committee having, to the best of their ability, discharged a very pleasant duty, now submit the result to their esteemed constituents, and to all friends of Sunday Schools. Even without this volume, the Jubilee was an event long to be remembered and discussed. Gathering up and embodying in permanent form the varied and rich material furnished for it, was a plain duty to the past, as well as to the present and the future. What stores the Centennial Jubilee may be able to furnish, the imagination may well shrink from depicting. Few of those who participated in this one can hope to be present at the other, unless, it may be, as silent, shadowy spectators. If such things are permitted to the inhabitants of other spheres, may we all be there to see.

## LETTERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

RECEIVED AFTER THE JUBILEE.

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*Letter from Thomas Hastings, Mus. Doct.*

NEW YORK, October 22, 1866.

REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D.:

DEAR SIR:

I had intended following your suggestion to my son, with a brief letter of reminiscences; but was prevented by a temporary dimness of sight, till it became too late for the occasion mentioned. There was, however, little that I could say from personal recollection that would have been of general interest.

The first time I passed through the place where Utica stands, the primitive forest had recently been removed, and the stumps of the trees were thickly shrouded by snow. The place, bating one or two shanties, was an unbroken solitude. In a few years, two rows of wooden houses appeared, with an unpaved street between them, which every spring and autumn would be deluged with mud. During a period of some sixty years, how has the scene changed!

Not living in the place till some thirty years had passed, I had little knowledge of the earlier periods of Sabbath School instruction. I remember, in this connection, the pleasant names of CAMP, MERRELL, OSTROM, CLARK, SKINNER, BRADISH, BRAYTON, PARMELE, &c. The last mentioned gentleman prepared for the school the first list of printed questions, which were afterwards enlarged and reprinted in Philadelphia. Another little item may not be destitute of interest. The hymn, "*Now be the Gospel Banner*," which has had so wide a circulation in this country and in England, was composed expressly for use of the Utica Anniversaries.



The first idea of Sunday School efforts was to fasten the Scriptures upon the juvenile mind for subsequent use in riper years. Utica, I think, was among the first to adopt a better system, and I trust it will not be behind other places in realizing the more immediate benefits which may be received—that of *early* gathering the lambs into the fold of Christ.

Mrs. HASTINGS joins me in the pleasant remembrances I am referring to. During a family residence of nearly eight years, ending in 1832, we found many with whom we took sweet counsel, most of whom have left for a brighter world. Of our three children, two are in the paradise above, and one remains as pastor of the people with whom we worship. He was baptised into your church by Rev. Dr. AIKEN, nearly forty years ago. They all became pious in juvenile years, and received their earliest training in Utica. This we can never forget.

Pardon me for detaining you so long. Though the occasion has passed when I would have gladly contributed somewhat to the general interest, I was unwilling to suffer the request to be wholly unnoticed.

Our kindest wishes to the Sunday School, to the congregation, and to its pastor.

Yours in Christian love,

TH. HASTINGS.

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*Letter from Rev. Joel Parker, D. D.*

NEWARK, November 8, 1866.

SAMUEL E. WARNER:

DEAR SIR:

Yours of the 5th inst. is before me. I do not think I have any thing in my possession touching the action and life of TRUMAN PARMELE at the time of his residence in Utica, that would aid the committee of publication.

I know what all his old friends in Utica know of his prepared lessons that were published, as the first book of Sunday School questions ever published, as I believe.

I served the Oneida Sunday School Union in the year 1826. TRUMAN PARMELE made all the arrangements for employing me at one dollar a day. He purchased the horse, saddle, and bridle for me, and furnished money for my expenses. I sallied forth from Utica late in May or early in June; and PARMELE and WILSON, and a few other kindred spirits stood all grinning on Main street to see their missionary go forth on his hard trotting Rosinante. I organized five County Unions in Onondaga, Tompkins, Cortland, Chenango, and Otsego counties, and after three months returned and rendered an account of my missionary work. I commonly made one address each day in school houses or court houses, and three addresses on Sundays in churches. I commended Mr. PARMELE's school every where as a model school, with the same lesson for all the classes, and the Superintendent questioning all the classes on the lesson. The questions on St. Matthew's Gospel, and the one same lesson system, were, I think, Mr. PARMELE's inventions. I had seen him often in his school at Utica, and knew the history of his Sunday School work at Utica and in Oneida county.

This intercourse with him led to his joining my Dey street church in New York, where he became an elder. It also resulted in my going to New Orleans. He became an elder there, and *built* the church on the Square where Dr. PALMER has since preached secession. *He built it.* It could not have been done without him; and so decided had been his influence in carrying the enterprise through, that when JOSEPH MAYBIN, one of the elders, insisted upon giving Mr. PARMELE a service of plate, the feeling to do so was so strong that nothing prevented it but Mr. PARMELE's persistent resistance, and his declaration that he would not accept it.

Pardon my history of my co-operation with Mr. PARMELE. It is not to your purpose, but I was led to it as the only means of adding anything of my own knowledge about him. He was always my beau ideal of a perfect Sunday School man.

Yours truly,

JOEL PARKER.

*Letter from James W. Tullman.*

DETROIT, December 10, 1866.

REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D.:

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Some little time ago I received a newspaper, sent, I suppose, by you, containing an account of your Sunday School celebration, for which I thank you, though I should have felt much more and better pleased had you sent me an *earlier* notice, that I might have been present, as I certainly should have been, had I been asked.

My first experience in Sunday School was there in the old Lancaster school room in Catharine street. My first attempt as teacher, was in connection with that school, trying to teach an old, gray-headed colored woman her letters. My impression is that this was in Mrs. CLARKE's school room. How well I remember her. She seemed to me at that time the very embodiment of the stern Christian professor. PARMELE and WINSTON were loving and winning in their ways, and I remember them with feelings of peculiar pleasure. FRED. WINSTON, as we used to call him, I meet in New York occasionally, and together we talk over old Utica days, and very early days they must have been, for I left there in 1824 and went to live in Geneva. But I was there a great deal after that, and in 1833 was married there. In this way I kept up a running acquaintance, somewhat intimate with Utica friends, until 1836, when I came here to live.

In looking over your proceedings, and reading the familiar names, I go back to Utica and early days, and recall the people of whom I have such very pleasant recollections, and with whom I kept up a most agreeable intercourse for many years after I had ceased to be one of them. Now how very, very few of them are left. I could go to Utica and find hardly a score that I once knew, and probably not five that would know me. Judge WILLIAM J. BACON, WARD HUNT, J. WATSON WILLIAMS, HORATIO SEYMOUR, PALMER V. KELLOGG, Mrs. CORNELIA GRAHAM *nee* COOPER, Mrs. DEAN, THOMAS R. WALKER, Mrs. GEORGE S. DANA. Mr. HANDY, I frequently see, as you know, and

HOVEY CLARKE is with us here. HOYT I do not remember to have seen since I left Utica, but the sister—of whom he speaks in his letter to your committee of invitation—Mrs. HUMPHREY, whom you must remember as the wife of FRIEND HUMPHREY, of Albany, I used often to meet. TOM SEWARD, as we used to call him, was here for several years. How well I remember him. GURD. BURCHARD too. How familiar are these names, and how many more could I recall of Utica boys. STOCKING, and *Pony* CLARKE. The HITCHCOCKS, COOPERS, BREESES, WILL. MALCOLM, GEORGE and JAMES WALKER, JOHN A. WELLES, recently dead, who spent most of his life here. ALF. WELLS, the LOTHROP boys, *Hadley* BACON, whose name was FRANK, a brother of the Judge, AMOS G. HULL, and a host of other boys, most of whom, I think, must have been, at some time, connected with your school. We have still here several of them, and all yet in good keeping, none of them yet being old men as HOYT says.

How well I remember MARY WALKER, tall and stately, earnest and sincere in manner. SARAH MALCOLM, bright and happy, and Miss VAN RENSSELAER, so beautiful as I then thought. Though but a very youngster at that time, I can remember their faces perfectly. The events with which they were associated seem as things of yesterday. But here I must stop. I had no thoughts of writing such a letter; but it would spin itself out, and I find it hard work to bring it to a close. One of these days, I hope to spend a day or two in Utica and look after old friends, you among the number.

How are you and yours, my dear Friend! I hear of you occasionally, and see you only now and then. But I think of you often, and then my thoughts and affections turn to Geneva with its pleasant associations and sacred memories. On Thanksgiving day we had at our table four generations,—my mother, myself, son, and grand-daughter. Surely I have cause to be grateful to the dear Lord for His goodness, new every morning, and fresh every evening. He has blessed me abundantly, and I would ever render thanks to

Him. With love to yourself and the dear ones of your household, believe me, ever truly yours,

J. W. TILLMAN.

*Note.*—Ere the foregoing letter had been put into type, the writer thereof was no longer numbered among the "*very, very few who are left,*" but had joined the larger company of his early comrades in the undiscovered country. Mr. TILLMAN died in the early part of March, 1867, at the age of fifty-seven. His letter affords a true index to his character. Warm-hearted, strong in his attachments, fond of old friends, and delighting in the memories of old times. In active life, Mr. TILLMAN was ever among the foremost; and his influence for good was always felt and acknowledged in political, social and religious affairs.—EDITOR.

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CAPTAIN CHARLES STUART BY A FRIEND.

Much has been said during the late meetings of Mr. GEO. S. WILSON and his favorite association. Mr. SEWARD has also favored us with an exceedingly interesting sketch of that other memorable teacher in this school, Captain CHARLES STUART, that wonderful man who carried with him the hearts of the children, however the older people might smile at his simple-hearted and eccentric ways. No one, however, has mentioned that Mr. STUART was the founder and patron of a society among the girls of that day, similar to the one that Mr. WILSON fostered among the boys. Of the members of this society, I am enabled to give only the names of ELIZABETH KING, SOPHIA CLARK, CORNELIA COOPER, EMMA BAGG, and SARAH MILLER, although there were several more. This society met each week, at the houses of the different members, proceeding in rotation. One of its exercises consisted in calling on each member for answers in writing to questions Mr. STUART had previously propounded. These answers were compared with one another, and if not found satisfactory, were corrected by the teacher with answers of his own. Questions and answers were afterwards recorded by each one in a book which she kept for the purpose. One of these books I have seen in the hands of a member of that society. The questions are one hundred in number, and with the answers, form a tolerably complete catechism on the duties of practical godliness, many of them being framed from passages of

Scripture. This exercise was followed by others of a lighter character, including music, after which some light refreshment was proffered. At the close, a medal was presented to that one of the girls who, for her general deportment, or for her skill and industry in preparing her answers, was thought most worthy to wear it during the ensuing week. The owner of the book I have just spoken of, remembered one especial adjudication of this medal. The society were assembled at the house of Judge MILLER, on Main street. Some apples were brought in at the close of the meeting, whereupon there ensued (on this particular occasion, we are to presume that it was not a common occurrence,) a rather rough scramble for the first choice among the favorite, but fatal fruit. To properly reprove their rudeness, Mr. STUART, reversing the course of the classic story, adjudged,—not the apple as the prize of beauty,—but the medal as a prize of good behavior, to the only one of the company who had not taken part in the scramble.

On holidays he was wont to stroll out with his young friends into the country, where he would entertain them with musical performances of his own, (on a French horn, as my informant, although she has almost forgotten, thinks was the instrument,) and to regale them with candies and nuts. But it so happened one day that Mr. STUART dropped in at the school of Rev. Mr. WOODBRIDGE, on John street, where most of the girls attended, and during his visit heard the teacher descant on the extravagant wickedness of spending money for candy which might so much better be spent in purchasing tracts, or administering to the spiritual necessities of the heathen; one or two pennies sufficing, said Mr. W., to buy a whole tract. Unfortunately for the girls, this visit to the school put an end to all treating with nuts and candy in their subsequent rambles. The incident illustrates the tender conscience of this child-like man.

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CAPTAIN CHARLES STUART BY ERASTUS CLARK.

A year or two before the war, Captain STUART came into my office, leaning on the arm of EDWARD S. BRAYTON. It

was a pleasant summer afternoon, and the blinds were partly closed. As I stepped down from my desk and went towards him, I thought I had never seen a finer face than his. There was no lack of force in it, but in combination with the force, and dominating it, was a rare gentleness and love. I had not seen the captain for more than twenty-five years. I was very young when he resided here; my personal knowledge of him was scant, but I knew him well by reputation, for he had been the friend of my mother, and the teacher of my sisters.

His manner was very affectionate, he blessed me, and called on God to bless me; he spoke of my mother who had gone, and of my sister in the South, expressed the hope that my sister and I were doing what we could for Christ, and for the poor and oppressed whom Christ loved. The impression his face made on me was very strong; his presence brightened the room.

A short time after his visit I told a friend of mine, and a countryman of his, one who very closely resembles him in some of his noble traits, that a Scotchman had been in my office that afternoon, that he stopped but a few moments, but that he brought with him the sunshine, and when he went away it was dark. I spoke of the impression to another friend, a man not given to foolish fancies, and he told me that when Captain STUART was praying his face seemed to be transfigured.

There is no absurdity in all this. The Greek, the Roman, and the Norman faces, have attracted notice and admiration for ages, for beauty, force, and conscious superiority; the result of national characteristics and surroundings; and it surely is no marvel that great natural humanity, that a life of self-sacrifice for others' good, that fifty years of earnest work for what he deemed to be the glory of God, and the welfare of his race, should have given to Captain STUART a presence of loveliness scarcely human.

## TRUMAN PARMELE BY ERASTUS CLARK.

In the fore front of my Sabbath School recollections, stand TRUMAN PARMELE and HELEN PLATT, his wife. The boyhood of Mr. PARMELE was comparatively humble, but he made an excellent use of such advantages as had been granted him. His struggle upward was very honorable to his energy and self-denial. His rare faculty for instructing and interesting children, and winning their regard, have been perhaps enough dwelt upon by others. I will add, that he had a cheery presence, quick wit, and great love of fun. His fondness for and appreciation of a jest did not, however, detract from his Christian character, but rather relieved and ornamented it. Mrs. PARMELE was the accomplished daughter of Judge JONAS PLATT, of the Supreme Court, a fine lawyer, a leading politician of the old Federal School, an honored and honorable gentleman.

Some few years after my graduation from the Sunday School, I took what was then a long journey, in company with Mr. PARMELE and his family, and it was my good fortune also, to live with them for months at the house of one of Mr. PARMELE'S most intimate friends, JOHN S. WALTON, of New Orleans. I learned the secret of his hold on the love of children from his talk with his young sons; a hold which all the boys of our Sunday School had felt, when we were too young to search by analysis for its cause. He readily adapted himself to the understanding of a child not more than four years old, and presented to young minds with a clearness not easily surpassed, truths somewhat hard for even the elders to grasp.

When he went to New Orleans to reside, more than thirty-five years ago, our friend sought out the few Presbyterians at that time in that city. He carried with him his fresh Northern energy, and the little band soon made up for its smallness of numbers, by its zeal and liberality. To every good work he gave with a bountiful hand. When the advent of Dr. JOEL PARKER raised a tumult in New Orleans, Mr. PARMELE stood by his pastor with unflinching courage. The sums he gave to the Presbyterian cause in



the Capital of the Southwest in the establishment of a religious press, in the erection of the First Presbyterian Church on La Fayette Park, were very large gifts, rated by even the standard of to-day. He was as liberal with his work as with his money; he labored incessantly in the prosecution of the church enterprise, until his hope was a reality. There have been changes since then. In 1838 the newspaper and the church passed into the hands of an organization to which Mr. PARMELE did not belong. He did not live to see a sight which some of his nearest and dearest friends, who vied with him in work and liberality have lived to see—the church of their early love led off by its pastor into rebellion—the pulpit of Dr. PARKER, turned by Dr. PALMER into a rostrum for the advocacy of treason, secession, and eternal slavery; Northern men, members of this same New Orleans church, forgetting the homes of their infancy, and the instructions of their childhood, sustaining by their plaudits and their money, the teachings of the South Carolina divine.

Had Mr. PARMELE lived, his heart would have been wrung by this prostitution of the bounty of his early manhood.\* After a residence of some years in New Orleans, Mr. PARMELE engaged in business in New York. Not for long, however, for his work was done, and he was taken. His work was well done. The first generation of boys, born at Utica, remember him, and till all are dead, will remember him with love and gratitude.

\* Since the above was written, I have heard that a new building has been reared within ten years past. This does not make my statement other than substantially true. The church organization is the same as before; whatever is new is the out-growth of the old, and neither would have had existence except for Mr. PARMELE, and the few friends whose zeal he stimulated. Those who knew him as I knew him, need not be told the light in which our beloved Superintendent would have held the thanksgiving sermon of Dr. PALMER in 1860; its arguments for treason, its glorification of slavery as a divine institution, and of cotton as a providential instrument of its spread and perpetuity. What a comment on that sermon the last five years have been! Dr. PALMER somewhat mistook the designs of Providence. Mr. PARMELE sowed no tares in our First Church Sabbath School; certainly not the tares of treason.

## NOTICES OF THE JUBILEE BY THE PRESS.

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*From the American Messenger.*

### SUNDAY SCHOOL JUBILEE YEAR.

The present year has been signalized by the Semi-Centennial celebration of many institutions in our land, which, during the fifty years of their history, have accomplished much for the glory of God and the welfare of man. The year 1816 was distinguished for the extensive and powerful revivals that blessed large portions of New England and the Middle States, a marked result of which was the great impulse given to benevolent and religious efforts. That year witnessed the formation of the American Bible Society, the American Education Society, and the New York Sunday School Union, which a few years after merged itself, with a similar society in Philadelphia, into the American Sunday School Union. In various other places Sunday Schools were formed that year, which have been active and useful during the half century, have this year commemorated the event. Celebrations have thus been observed in Norwich, Conn.; in Washington, Penn.; in Charlestown, Mass., where the first Sunday School in that State was formed, under the care of Rev. Dr. MORSE; in Utica, N. Y., and elsewhere. One of these may be noticed as an illustration.

The Semi-Centennial of the School in Utica, October 20, was an occasion of hallowed interest, from the presence and reminiscences of many who had there received religious instruction, and from the letters of many others occupying important positions in the church and the State in different parts of our own country, and at mission stations in heathen lands. It was stated that the sun never sets on the missionary fields occupied by those who were once connected with this Sabbath School. It has sent out seventeen ministers and fourteen missionaries, among whom were Rev. Dr. H.

G. O. DWIGHT, of Turkey, Dr. GRANT, of Persia, S. WELLS WILLIAMS, of China, W. F. WILLIAMS, of Assyria, JAMES GARRET and A. NORTH, of India. In addition to its own well-filled and active School, it has sustained several flourishing mission schools, and has continually been a nursery to the church, which has been distinguished for its Christian activity.

Two encouraging facts, among many others, were stated, illustrating the blessed results of the personal efforts of faithful teachers for the salvation of their scholars. WALTER KING, Esq., distinguished for his biblical attainments, for many years conducted a large Bible Class, during which time over a hundred members of the class gave evidence that the instructions they had received had been blessed in their conversion. A female teacher of the School who was one of its founders, a lady of high culture and of devoted piety, before her death could point to a hundred of her scholars whom she had been the means of leading to the Saviour. The tributes to the faithfulness of TRUMAN PARMELE, GEORGE S. WILSON, and others of the superintendents and teachers, were frequent and most affectionate.

This school is another illustration of the great results that flow from the feeble efforts put forth in honor of Christ. It was established in 1816, by *five young ladies*, who were among the fruits of a precious revival, and who, in the ardor of their first love, sought thus to benefit the children of the poor, stimulated to the effort by reports of what had been accomplished in New York, by the labors of Mrs. DIVIE BETHUNE, daughter of the sainted ISABELLA GRAHAM. The young ladies met with no encouragement from the pastor or the older Christians, many of whom regarded the movement as a desecration of the holy Sabbath; but with the ardor of youthful enthusiasm and love for the Saviour, they went on, in spite of coldness and opposition, until its fruits became apparent, and it was recognized and cherished by the church, to which, for fifty years, it has proved a faithful auxiliary. Few schools in the country have been more useful, and many in the eternal world will bless the memory of those five young Christian ladies who,

a half century ago, commenced an enterprise whose influence and results have been felt in all parts of the world.

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*From the New York Evangelist.*

UTICA SUNDAY SCHOOL JUBILEE.

CENTRAL NEW YORK, *October 25, 1866.*

*Eds. Evangelist:*—The State Convention at Utica did not exhaust the interest of its citizens in Sunday Schools, but gave it a new impetus. For some time past the First Presbyterian Church had been preparing to keep the Semi-Centennial of their noble and noted school, and it is now safe to say, that the result has overpaid the labor and exceeded the anticipation.

I was fortunate enough to come in at the closing scene (re-union) at Dr. FOWLER'S residence on Monday evening, and I found all parties in a high state of satisfaction with the experiences of the Jubilee season, then in its third and final day.

There was good reason for celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Church School. No other west of New York, has a more memorable history. Rev. W. F. WILLIAMS, missionary to Assyria, recalls how New Orleans merchants used to time their journeys to New York so as spend the Sabbath in Utica, and visit the First Church Sunday School. It is also among my boyish memories how conspicuous above all sanctuaries Central New York could boast, towered the great tall-steepled "First," with its immense congregation and crowded school-rooms, and how almost interminable seemed the walk to my seat at the further end of the gallery, the first time I marched in, in company with numerous other students of CHARLES BARTLETT'S High School. It was a sight for man or boy in that day, to "walk around" this "Zion and mark well her palaces."

It was a good thought, also, to "tell it to the generations following." Hence the Jubilee gathering at City Hall, Saturday evening last, of the past and present members of

the school, presided over by Judge BACON, an old Superintendent of the school, who was assisted by those equally enthusiastic friends and teachers of children, Hon. J. F. SEYMOUR, R. S. WILLIAMS, and WILLIAM TRACY. The first two, after Judge BACON's opening address, read letters, from old teachers dated from almost all parts of the known world, not omitting one from Pekin, sent by S. WELLS WILLIAMS, and another from Mardin, by Rev. W. F. WILLIAMS, Messrs. SHEPARD, of Hudson, TRACY and BURCHARD, of New York, CLARKE, of Detroit, and SEWARD, of Utica, made pleasant speeches, only inferior in interest to the more numerous ones delivered in all parts of the great hall, when the ceremonies proper of the tea-tables had been fairly inaugurated.

Sabbath morning the congregation at the First Church was swelled beyond its customary huge proportions to attend upon that part of the Jubilee services assigned to this hour. Dr. FOWLER preached from Ex. ii:9: "Take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." The auxiliary relation of the school to the church was exhibited, and the special debt of obligation which this church had incurred to its vigorous and faithful helper. The effectiveness of the discourse may be judged by the fact that at the close an offer of \$1,000 was sent to the pulpit to provide still larger accommodations for the school, too much straightened in its present liberal-sized rooms. By request, the boxes were passed through the congregation, and brought in nearly \$5,000 in aid of the same object. So that a new school edifice is the next thing in order.

The afternoon was given to the children, who filled the body seats of the great church, leaving the side seats and galleries to the adults. Addresses were made by Messrs. WARNER and VERNON, of New York, Mr. SEYMOUR, of Utica, and Mr. CLARKE, of Detroit, Michigan.

A still bigger crowd of people came out to the third service, at 7 P. M. After the devotional exercises, R. S. WILLIAMS, Esq., the efficient Superintendent, read an elaborate paper giving the history and results of the past fifty years of the school. One of its items will be sufficiently sugges-

tive, viz; that more than thirty ministers and missionaries have been furnished the Church from this school, and among them some of the brightest names that shine in the constellation of Christian worthies, as, witness those of Drs. H. G. O. DWIGHT and ASAHIEL GRANT. Among her ministers are found the names of Rev. Drs. H. S. CLARK, E. D. MORRIS, and E. BRIGHT, Rev. Messrs. GEO. S. WILSON, E. WILLIAMS, C. STEWART, O. BRONSON, W. F. WILLIAMS, J. H. DWIGHT, A. J. UPSON, S. L. MERRELL, and others. Memorable too are the names and influence of such teachers as TRUMAN PARMELE, WILLIAM CURTIS NOYES, THOMAS MAYNARD, GEO. TRACY, Mrs. OSTROM, Mrs. CARROLL, Mrs. WILLIAMS, Mrs. CLARKE, and many others.

Addresses of marked interest were delivered by Prof. A. J. UPSON, of Hamilton College, and Rev. Dr. BRIGHT, editor of the New York *Examiner and Chronicle*. Thus ended a series of Sabbath services such as are seldom enjoyed in the experience of any one church, and whose impression will not be easily erased from the memory of the many hundreds permitted to attend upon them. The re-union at Dr. FOWLER's was a fitting *finale* to the festival occasion.

One thing, however, remains to be done to render the influence of the Jubilee service complete, viz: a carefully compiled volume in which the results of the past fifty years of this favored school shall be preserved, for the perusal and encouragement of all friends of Sabbath Schools.

That history would speak more eloquently for the great cause now so prominently claiming the attention of the Church, than the most labored argument of our ablest Sunday School advocates. I have heard that such a volume is contemplated, and hope it may be speedily forthcoming.

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*From the Sunday School Times.*

"FIFTY YEARS AGO." RE-UNION JUBILEE. SUNDAY SCHOOL SEMI-CENTENNIAL IN UTICA, NEW YORK.

A great occasion has just closed at Utica. It was the commemoration services of the first Sabbath School planting in this city, now so full of Sunday School gardens, and

so rich in the sweet fruits and flowers they have yielded to careful cultivation. The celebration is the Semi-Centennial of Dr. FOWLER'S Sabbath School, the First Presbyterian, of **Utica**. The services began in the City Hall, on Saturday evening, October 20th, and were appropriately continued through the following day, the Sabbath, in Dr. FOWLER'S church, closing with a social re-union at the pastor's residence on Monday evening.

On Saturday evening the friends of the school, with a large number of invited guests, many of them old members of the school, come from long distances, assembled with grateful hearts in the City Hall to pass an evening in social enjoyment, in recalling the past, and giving thanks to God for his mercies. A bountiful collation was spread by the ladies of the First Church, which was discussed with bountiful appreciation. Letters were read from several distinguished men and women once members of the school, speeches were delivered, "Auld Lang Syne," and other sweet hymns were sung, the Scriptures read, prayer offered, and a feast of reason and religion enjoyed to the full. No occasion could have been more worthy of such a worthy remembrance of it. The Hall was decorated with appropriate inscriptions. Over the door of entrance were the words "1866—The Year of Jubilee." Over the staging in the rear, to the left, was an inscription "Our Ministers," a list of the pastors of the church following. In the centre was the date "1816," with the names of the five founders of the First Church Sunday School (all ladies.) One of these graced the occasion by her presence. "Our Honored Dead" was another caption, followed by a list of worthies who had died with the Sunday School harness on. On the right, above the staging, was a tablet containing the names of "Our Missionaries," twelve in number, who had been sent forth from that school to teach the nations sitting in darkness. Numbers of literary men and otherwise distinguished characters, members of the school, with the clergy of the city, &c., occupied a platform on the east side of the Hall.

Hon. WM. J. BACON, an old Superintendent of the school

who was Vice President of the late State Sunday School Convention held in Utica, occupied the chair. His opening address was peculiarly eloquent and beautiful.

Among a great number of letters received, several were read and heard with deepest interest, recalling as they did early labors and laborers, struggles, victories, rewards and the wonderfully rich experiences that cluster around such a center of gospel influences. S. WELLS WILLIAMS, missionary at Pekin, China, sends his share of precious memories, dated from the Celestial Empire, 31st of May. FREDERIC WILLIAMS, missionary in Assyria, sends his cheering greetings from the East, under date of May 8. Other eminent Sunday School spirits from different parts of the land sent up their contributions of instructive and grateful reminiscences. One speaks of the school as his spiritual birth-place, another as the field of his early growing and strengthening, while nearly all combine to revere the name of TRUMAN PARMELE, one of the first and ever-honored Superintendents of the school, which, by the way, is believed to be first in the State established west of Albany.

The speeches of the evening were of the same grateful tenor with the letters. All hearts seemed to be sweetly subdued under the presiding influences of the occasion.

At a late hour, and after a season of unalloyed pleasure not often permitted in the same measure and kind, the gathering was dismissed upon the invocation of heaven's richest blessing.

On Sabbath morning the services of the Semi-Centennial were continued in the First Church. A large crowd filled its spacious audience chamber. Several pastors occupied the pulpit with Dr. FOWLER. The doctor preached a beautifully appropriate discourse from Exodus ii: 9,—“Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.”

On Sabbath afternoon a grand children's meeting was held. The addresses were highly appropriate and appreciated by the little ones. The singing was charming. After the adult audience was dismissed, the children remained some time singing their sweet songs.



The closing public service of the Jubilee was held in the evening with another crowded audience. The feature of the occasion, was the reading of the Semi-Centenary Report of the Sunday School, by the present Superintendent, Mr. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS. It was a peculiarly interesting document. It traced the foundation, rise and progress of the school, mentioning with terms of grateful love, the prominent actors in its early history, and noting the details of its growth, the changes of location, influence on the community, starting of schools around it, &c., &c.

Prof. UPSON, of Hamilton College, Rev. Dr. BRIGHT, editor of the New York *Examiner and Chronicle*, who was formerly a member of the school, and Rev. Mr. BRACE, made fitting addresses.

The whole occasion was one never to be forgotten. It excited great interest throughout the city. The papers of Monday were filled with accounts of it. One in particular, the UTICA MORNING HERALD, devoted more than half its reading space to it, nearly eleven closely printed columns being taken up with the report of the services. Among the hymns sung, which were printed on a neat programme, were the following: "Auld Lang Syne," "Shall we gather at the river?" "When shall we meet again?" "We've 'listed in a holy war," "Why forbid them? Jesus said," "Who are these in bright array?" "Glory to God in the highest," "Our hearts are full—divinely blest;" Jubilee hymn, "The trumpet's piercing cry," "Say, brothers, will you meet us?" "We won't give up the Bible," "The Bible, the Bible, more precious than gold," "Your mission," &c.

May the schools of the First Church of Utica, live and prosper in the future, even more than in the past, and come to their *Centenary* anniversary, with, if possible, even greater cause of gratitude to the great Teacher for his abounding goodness toward them.

## The Improvement of our Sunday School Jubilee.

A SERMON PREACHED OCT. 28, 1866, THE SUNDAY SUCCEEDING THE  
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OF THE FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, UTICA.

BY THE PASTOR, REV. P. H. FOWLER, D. D.

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### EXODUS XII: 14.

"AND THIS DAY SHALL BE UNTO YOU FOR A MEMORIAL."

In a matter of fact age, we are prone to depreciate sentiment. We think of it as merely poetic. It is not of stern enough stuff for practical use.

And this is the kind of mistake that men of affairs constantly make. They look at results, without reverting to their prime causes. Concentrating their aim on what is to be accomplished, they notice only what immediately conduces to it. The last of a train is all that commands their regard.

Now sentiment does not expend itself on itself. It is not a mere luxury of the heart. It is a great power in the world. The race is largely controlled by it.

Men see a monument:—it covers the lamented dead, and they exclaim, "Why all this waste! The money had better been spent for the living; commerce or manufactures, or agriculture,—literature, or science, or charity,—the home, or the church, would have been a wiser appropriation of it, than granite or marble." But is *natural affection* of no account, and is anything costly that expresses and thus encourages it?

A celebration is held, flags fly, cannons roar, processions march, orators harangue, festive boards groan. With sensibilities made callous by business and work, many a one looks on with wonder at what seems to them the puerilities

enacted. "Why this loss of time, why this abandonment of labor, why this expenditure of money, why this wear of excitement?"

But is *patriotism* of no account. Should love of country be extinguished by being repressed!

The human instinct is juster in its judgments than the biassed and perverted notions of individuals or communities, or periods. There is a natural prompting of monuments and memorials. We are so constituted as to incline to them, and what God has disposed us towards, we do well to follow out.

And the truth is not only inscribed on us, and acted out in our normal movements, but it is expressly taught. Commemorative services have been of frequent divine appointment. The Sabbath celebrated the creation of the world; the Passover celebrated the departure of the Israelites from Egypt; the Pentecost celebrated the giving of the law at Sinai; and the feasts of Trumpets, or New Moon, Purim, Dedication, the Sabbath year, and the year of Jubilee, were also commemorative occasions. And what is the Lord's Supper now, but a remembrance of Christ, and what is the Christian Sabbath now, but a celebration of his rising from the dead.

But for our recent national experience, there might be some excuse for our disparagement of sentiment and its manifestations. When no peril threatened our country, and we could not prize it under apprehensions for it, we might have been pardoned for the apparent lack of intense interest in it, and for withholding marked demonstrations of fondness for it. But how dear we felt it to be, when so formidably assailed and so imminently risked, and how irrepressible were our feelings towards it, and how delightful was the general exhibition of attachment to it. What American can despise patriotism, sentiment though it be, and who can condemn national Jubilees?

A flag was once to most of us, perhaps, a mere piece of bunting. It had little meaning and less inspiration. But

how much the star spangled banner enwraps in its folds, as the war disclosed, and what thrills its unfurling may create, as the war frequently proved. Devotion to the flag may have seemed childish in 1860, and before—it was nothing but a sentiment;—but how manly it seems in 1866, and who but entertained and expressed it in the days that tried our souls.

There is deep philosophy in respect to olden times, and in reverence for the excellent and useful. It may be slighted as a sentiment, but it is mighty as a principle. While essentially sacred, it is practically useful. *It improves the character and promotes well doing.* Men are the better for it, and accomplish the more good through it. Mementoes of the past and of the actors in it, powerfully affect those who live in the present. We may not always define the influence, but we always experience it. It comes over us and passes through us. It is a spell upon us, and a motor within us. It deeply impresses our hearts, and forcibly arouses our powers.

And *how instructive the lessons* they convey. Wisdom comes from reflection. It is the child of history. Retrospection adopts it.

And what *incentives and encouragements to duty*, come from the memorials we set up and observe. They portray the excellent of the earth and record their deeds, and as we see who they were and what they have done, there is an impulse to imitate and emulate them.

And are there not *debts we owe them*. Suppose they have gone beyond our reach,—suppose they cannot be approached by any honors we may pay, is there not that within us which teaches that they may claim a recognition from us. There is nothing we desire more when living, than a good name when we are dead. We can dispense with everything that may be offered to us now, if we shall be held in respectful and pleasant memory then, and when such a tribute has been well earned, is it not worse than sacrilege to withhold it?

And are not such memorials *due to God*?—due to Him, not simply because he has sanctioned and also instituted them, and thus indicated the wish that all generations should rear and observe them, but also because they call to mind his goodness and grace. What are the events, and the enterprises, and the persons they celebrate, but His ordering and raising up, and in calling them to remembrance, we gratefully think of Him.

We have just been observing the Fiftieth Anniversary of our Sunday School and reviewing its history, reverting particularly to its origin and early age, and bringing before us its founders and first officers and teachers. The exercises befitted the occasion, and were legitimate as tried by the dictates of nature, by divinely set precedents, and by their adaptedness to good. The memorial was delightful to all who attended it. I know not that I ever enjoyed a season so much. The reminiscences in which we indulged and with which we were favored, furnished a feast for the soul. What a luxury it was to let out the best affections of our hearts and pour them on those whom we rejoiced to recognize as our benefactors, and whose characters made them worthy of homage and love. What a satisfaction it was to trace the career of our school, and to gather up the widely scattered and thickly strewn blessings it had dispensed. How sweet it was to mingle our sympathies, to dissolve our souls in one flood, to melt together as kindred drops.

But the joy of the services ought not to be the sole fruit of the service. While the pleasure of it was lawful, the improvement of it is imperative. There ought to be some substantial benefit derived from it. It would be a sin to fail to be the better for it, which we might well fear would be punished by a curse from it. We must not be content with the gratification it gave. Thankful for that, let us seek the advantage it offers. It was too much of an occasion to be exhausted with the hours in which it was spent.

There is a large use of it, to which it should be applied. There are lessons it teaches, that ought to be noted and practiced, and there are impulses it communicates, that ought to be obeyed.

How emphatically we have been taught that *great effects proceed from small causes*,—that magnificent achievements unexpectedly follow little undertakings.

We often hear of this and of marked illustrations of it, but the Semi-Centennial of our School brought it home to us, and endowed it with a force we never knew it to have before.

Fifty years ago, five young girls just admitted to the church, were told of Sunday Schools, one of which had been recently organized in Troy, and it was suggested to them to establish another here. The thought was acted upon at once. No inhabitant of the town had heard of an institution of the kind. That wise and indefatigable pastor, HENRY DWIGHT, was unprepared to second the enterprise, though he did not oppose it. Elders and deacons and mature Christians had their doubts about it. But as no interdict was laid upon them, though no encouragement was given to them, these five Misses constrained a pious matron to open the doors of her humble school room to them, and canvassing the streets for two weeks before to secure scholars, they opened their session with a motley collection of youth. Till then fear had alternated and mingled with hope, and more anxious suspense was seldom endured. But the first day of the school determined its permanence. It was an experiment still indeed,—small in size, chaotic in condition, obscure in situation, meagre in appliances,—but the beginning was auspicious enough to inspire courage. Look in upon it. It is assembled on Hotel Street, in the plain apartment where a goodly dame of primitive times, during the week taught boys and girls. It is not a school house of our days, but a small room of a dwelling, used for a school. Black and white mingle in the color of the scholars, and the garb and counte-

nance and manners of most of the number, show that they are the children of poverty and neglect. No representatives from church or state—no visitors of any kind appear in the scene. The five, still in their teens, who have undertaken the project, are left alone to initiate it. Perhaps not a thought of another mind is turned to it at the time. So little interest has been awakened in it,—so little expectation has been excited by it, that it begins entirely without notice. The anxious girls are promptly at the spot. See their agitation in their restless movements and frequent whisperings. There is a flush on that cheek and a pallor on this,—and what redness there is in these eyes, and what wildness in those. The scholars come in—one by one, and in pairs, and a few in larger groups. Some modestly and timidly slip along, and others with gleeful faces and rollicking air. The curiosity of children arouses them all. The gathering is completed now,—the boys and girls have become wonted to the place,—universal freedom is felt,—the buzz of voices is raised,—some mirth is indulged, and a few tricks are played. Behold the five. How smiling they are, and how like fairies they fly about. They know not precisely what to do. Hasty consultations are held. Something like an organization is formed. Some simple exercises are held. God's Word is read. The pleasure which the attendance had given is expressed. A statement is made of what it is proposed to do. The children are thanked for coming, and requested to advertise the school, and bring their young friends with them, a hymn is sung, prayer is offered, the scholars are dismissed, the young teachers get close together, tearful and laughing, and so much have they to say of what has transpired, and of what shall be done, that it is hard to part, and when compelled to break away, follow their fleet steps, enter their homes, and hear the tale which, with breathless haste, they tell.

The starting of a school on a Sunday by five young Misses, in circumstances like these, was in itself a trifling affair. Much as it exercised the founders, they were but girls, and we wonder not that no attention was attracted to

it. But few had any knowledge of it, and none, besides the teachers, made any account of it, and they had no conceptions beyond a small circle of scholars and a brief term of instruction. It was not a planting they proposed,—no generating of the germ of things. The work they expected to be done, was the work they set out to perform, and it was a very modest work they contemplated. Good they presumed would be accomplished, but only good to those they taught, and through them individually to others. They never imagined that they might inaugurate an institution, which would stand for uncounted years, and perpetually rise and extend, and gather in thousands and thousands to be trained for the Lord, who would go forth to organize and sustain a multitude of institutions of the kind, and to distribute all over the world the benefits of the care they had received. And if no fancy like this flitted before them, how much less did it rise before their family friends, and their fellow communicants of the church, and the heedless community. No one suspected to what the enterprise might grow, and had there been imaginings about it, how the result has outstripped the boldest that could have been formed. Indeed, none of us ever knew, until last week, what our Sunday School was. Unveiled then, we saw it in proportions which we had not conceived before. Its magnitude surprised us—its massiveness awed us. It stood forth a St. Peter's, in the magnificence it has.

*What an encouragement is this to every servant of the Lord?* Suppose it appear a petty enterprise in which he is engaged,—suppose that few condescend to look at it, and that most of them smile or sneer,—let him not despise the day of small things. A handful of corn is cast in the earth:—the fruit thereof shakes like Lebanon. A fine thread of water issues from a spring; but trace the current, and what a flood empties into the sea. Five young girls start a Sunday School, and in fifty years, thousands and thousands of scholars rise up and call them blessed, and not a few of the thousands are among the good and the great of the earth.



Especially let Sunday School workers take courage. Their labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. It seems to some eyes, and often to their's, a narrow sphere in which they move, and diminutive material on which they toil, but the only true point of view lies in the future, and the finished articles must define their employment. Wait,—wait, until time describes your range and your work. Fifty years hence, and what a reckoning will be made. The story of the five who formed our Sunday School, and of their early associates and successors, it is not hard to suppose may be repeated in the history that is being made now.

*And let not the biographies to which we have listened, dishearten you by the apparently unapproachable pre-eminence of those who have preceded you.* They were superior Christians indeed. Religion had a strong hold of them, and thoroughly controlled them. It was deep experience they had of divine things, and unsparing devotion to the divine cause. They dared much and diligently prosecuted it. They were intelligent, too, students of the Scriptures and scholars in them. They taught from the fullness of overflowing hearts and minds.

I detract nothing from them. I say nothing of the mirage which distance creates, and that, perhaps, enlarges their dimensions and beautifies their hues. They attained to a very high rank in spiritual graces and acquirements, and as teachers they belonged to a very high class. But conscious as you may be of inferiority to them, let not that paralyze you. Rather be stimulated and cheered. The succession to which you belong, imposes the duty upon you of the most exalted aspirations and aims. You ought to seek eminence in piety, activity and intelligence. The example before you, you ought to leave behind you. Let not the standard of Christian attainment decline here. Transmit to those who follow you, what you have received from those who preceded you. Keep up the character of the school. Let the earnestness and instructiveness that

have hitherto distinguished it, remain its notable characteristics.

And God will help you in this. His grace is equal to it. Much as it involves, he will qualify you for it. He made those who went before, what they were, and he is able and willing to make you like them.

*And the school is the ward of the church.* We owe it assiduous and loving care. It depends upon us and should be generously provided for by us. The revelations of the last week have presented it in a new form and light. We did not see it before. We had no idea of its work and worth. The testimonies to it from the beneficiaries of it, the results it has produced, the numbers it has blessed, the immensity of the good it has accomplished, far transcend any conceptions we had formed. It is a great institution, deserving our highest consideration, our most strenuous co-operation, and our largest benefactions. Particularly now, let there be no delay in completing the sum so generously begun, for the urgently needed enlargement of the room. It will be a noble testimonial of our appreciation of the School, and a grand contribution to its facilities for usefulness. The future will fulfil the promise of the wisdom of such a gift, which the past presents, and posterity will thank and applaud us for it.

*And what mistakes are made in estimating enterprises and employments.* What has become of what fifty years ago commanded the attention of our town in the way of individual pursuits and of public undertakings. Scarce a trace of most of them remains. They have passed out of memory, as well as out of being. Mercantile houses, manufacturing and mechanical establishments, associations and incorporations, have vanished and left no vestige behind. The little Sunday School, which so few noticed, and so many disdained, still survives, and the monuments of its value rise massively in the community and stud the world.

*And what mistakes are made in estimating persons.* Time tests them, and tried by time, who were effecting the most here fifty years ago:—the prominent actors on the stage, or the youthful five, who instituted and conducted our school. And they were young *women* too, long without the assistance or countenance of men, and largely has the school been always sustained by the sex. We heard most at the Jubilee, of the male teachers, because male scholars were the speakers,—but suppose utterance had been given to female voices, how much we would have heard not only of the founders of the school, but of their lady associates and successors,—the CLARKS, the WILLIAMSES, the BAGGS, the BRADISHES, and their many kindred spirits, all now in heaven, not to mention those who are spared to us on earth.

*And can we doubt what is the compensating object of life.* The family position of the memorable five opened the avenue for them to fashion and pleasure, and suppose they had hasted in on it, would they have reached the recompense they acquired? Others in their circumstances, and of their age, sought fashion and pleasure, and which would you prefer, the entire sum of what they secured, or the two or three days' experience of that founder of our school who attended its Jubilee. Fashion and pleasure! how do they compare with usefulness in the reward they give, and which, young women, will you resolve to obtain.

*And what any of us do must be done quickly.* Time flies. The period of activity is exceedingly brief. How affecting it was to see those who, in the freshness and buoyancy of youth, taught and learned in the school, returning to it with gray hairs and feeble steps. Age is already upon them, and their labors and ours must soon cease.

*Our personal attachments are life's golden links, and outside of the family, they can be formed best, if not alone, in associations for improvement and usefulness.* Business connections are likely to be too mercenary to admit of them. The in-

tercourse of society is too light and chilling to produce them. We grow together when we are joined together for improvement and usefulness. What a touching sight was the clasping between our former teachers and scholars.

And if such be the attachments on earth thus produced, what may we expect of them in heaven? How they must cling together there, who have labored together in getting and doing good here.

## LIST OF OFFICERS.

The following, (near as can be ascertained,) are the names of those who have been Superintendents of this Sunday School:

### MALE DEPARTMENT.

|                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| WILLIAM WILLIAMS,     | JOHN F. SEYMOUR,    |
| TRUMAN PARMELE,       | FAY EDGERTON,       |
| GEORGE S. WILSON,     | JOSIAH T. MARSHALL, |
| ROSWELL KEELER,       | GEORGE LAWSON,      |
| ALFRED HITCHCOCK,     | RICHARD H. WELLS,   |
| BRIGGS W. THOMAS,     | JAMES C. WELLS,     |
| EDWARD VERNON,        | GEORGE TRACY,       |
| ROBERT B. SHEPARD,    | GEORGE D. FOSTER,   |
| BERIAH B. HOTCHKIN,   | THOMAS MAYNARD,     |
| WILLIAM J. BACON,     | ERWIN A. HAMMOND,   |
| WILLIAM CURTIS NOYES, | ROBERT S. WILLIAMS. |

The Superintendents of the Female Department extend only to the union of both departments under one Superintendent, in 1838.

### FEMALE DEPARTMENT.

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| MISS SUSAN WHITE,          | MRS. SARAH K. CLARKE, |
| " ALIDA M. VAN RENSSELAER, | " DELIA AIKEN,        |
| " MARY E. WALKER,          | MISS SUSAN BURCHARD,  |
| " JOANA SICKLES,           | " RACHEL WELLS,       |
| MRS. SARAH K. CLARKE,      | " LOUISA KIRKLAND,    |
| MISS BETSEY BARKER,        | " SUSAN TRACY,        |
| MRS. MARY E. OSTROM,       | MRS. SARAH LANSING.   |

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### OFFICERS OF THE SCHOOL, 1866.

|                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| ROBERT S. WILLIAMS,  | SUPERINTENDENT.           |
| WILLIAM S. TAYLOR,   | ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT. |
| MRS. MARY W. BUSSEY, | FEMALE SUPERINTENDENT.    |
| JOHN B. WELLS,       | TREASURER.                |
| GEORGE L. CURRAN,    | SECRETARY.                |
| LAWRENCE HURLBURT,   | LIBRARIAN.                |
| HENRY G. ESTES,      | } ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS.   |
| EDWARD HURLBURT,     |                           |

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